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HACU 29th Annual Conference The Sophomore Year Initiative (SYI): Removing Barriers to Empower Students

(Brian Williams, Director SYI Program at Lehman College)



Today's Agenda

**Sophomore Year Initiative (SYI)-
Program Description**

**The Sophomore Slump-
Definition;
Research;
Impact**

**SYI
Inclusive
Service
delivery
Model - A
Brief
Overview**

**SYI Services
– Removing
Student
Barriers**

**SYI –
A Case Study**

Sophomore Year Initiative (SYI) – Program Description

Background

- **Sophomore Year Initiative (SYI):** Lehman college leveraged its Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation to secure USDOE Title V funding in Fall'12 . **Grant Cycle** - 5-Year grant leading to Institutionalization in October of 2017.
- **Collaboration:** Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

Mission

- **Targeted Student Population:** (1) First-time, Full-time freshmen (FTFTF) entering during their 2nd semester (2) All sophomores (3) Transfer students who enter with 15-45 credits
- **Goals/Objectives: Increase** - (1) Academic success (2) Persistence and retention from first to second to third year (3) Rate of progress towards graduation (4) The percentage of students who elect a major between 30-45 credits (5) Service transfer students who enter with 15-45 credits

Services

- **Inclusive Service Delivery:** (1) Academic Advisement (2) Career Advisement (3) Personal Counseling (4) Provide Long Range Academic Plan instruction in LEH-100 freshman block seminar (5) Outreach/Advisement – S.T.E.A.R Early Warning System (6) Tutoring (7) Summer Math-104 Support workshop
- **Enrichment Activities:** “Majors/Minors” fair; Pre-Majors Clubs events; Academic/Career/Counseling workshops; Information sessions;

Sophomore Year Initiative (SYI) – Demographic Data

Demographics - Fa'12 to Sp'15 – (includes FTFTF, Sophomores & Transfers)

| Ethnicity | Count | Percentage |
|--|----------------------|---------------|
| • Latino or Hispanic | 1376 Students | 53.07% |
| • Black/African American | 663 Students | 25.57% |
| • Asian or Pacific Islander | 291 Students | 11.22% |
| • White, Non-Hispanic | 161 Students | 6.21% |
| • American-Indian or Native Alaskan | 19 Students | 0.73% |
| • Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 1 Student | 0.04% |
| • Unknown | 82 Students | 3.16% |
| <hr/> | | |
| Total SYI Student Cohort = | 2593 Students | 100% |

Sophomore Slump – Barriers to Student Success

- Research shows when some students transition from freshman to sophomore year they experience the **“Sophomore Slump.”**
- **“Sophomore Slump” (Defined)** –Lemons and Richmond (1987)
As a “period of developmental confusion” that results from student’s struggles with achieving competency, desiring autonomy, establishing identity, and developing purpose.”
- **“Sophomore Slump” (Impact)** -
 1. “Students who earn good grades during their first term are far more likely to persist to graduation than are first-term students who do not experience initial academic success.” (Pantages & Creedan, 1978) – **Persistence**
 2. Decisions to stay or leave college correlate more strongly with first-year students’ academic performance than with pre-enrollment characteristics (Pascarella & Chapman, 1983) – **Retention to graduation**

What are the Institutional Risks?

- Higher Educational Institutions risk declining student persistence and retention to graduation. (Kuh, Kinzie et. al, 2005)
- **Drop-out Rate**: Among Public 4-yr. Colleges, 29% college students drop out each year. (NCES, USDOE-2013)
- **Solutions**: Dr. Vincent Tinto's Theory (1993): Dimensions of Institutional Action; reasoned that students need:
 1. Transition Assistance-FYI
 2. Early contact and community building- FYI/SYI (LEH-100)
 3. Academic involvement and support- FYI (LEH-100) / SYI (LRAP)
 4. Monitoring and early warning – SYI (S.T.E.A.R)
 5. Counseling and advising – SYI (Intentional, Intrusive, One-To-One Advisement and counseling)

Lehman College – Sophomore Challenges

Lehman College Sophomore Challenges:

- Maintaining GPA needed to remain at Lehman
- Achieving minimum GPA needed to enter desirable majors
- Seeking and finding help when needed
- Choosing a major by 45 credits and finding a career of interest
- Balancing work and family with college
- Finding financial resources to complete degree in a timely manner

Factors affecting challenges:

- Excitement has worn off from freshman year
- Personal and/or academic indecision
- Increasing demands of curriculum
- Pressures inside/outside of school overwhelm students

Addressing Sophomore Challenges:

- All Sophomores may benefit from SYI services and programming
- “At-Risk” and Early Warning Model was established to support students who experience difficulty to increase chances of success and retention

Lehman College Persistence and Retention Data – A Brief Overview

What is the Data at Lehman showing?

- **Persistence/Retention** – Greatest decline - transition of first-time full-time freshman (FTFTF) from sophomore to junior year. Ex: (F'10 Cohort-619 FTFTF; 489 (Yr.1-79%); 393 (Yr.2-64%); 338 (Yr.3-54%)
Overall 6-yr graduation rate - Lower than the national average and CUNY senior college average. Ex: (F'07 Cohort-874 FTFTF; 14.8% (4 YRS); 28.4% (5 YRS); 37.0% (6 YRS) – (Lehman 2014 Databook)

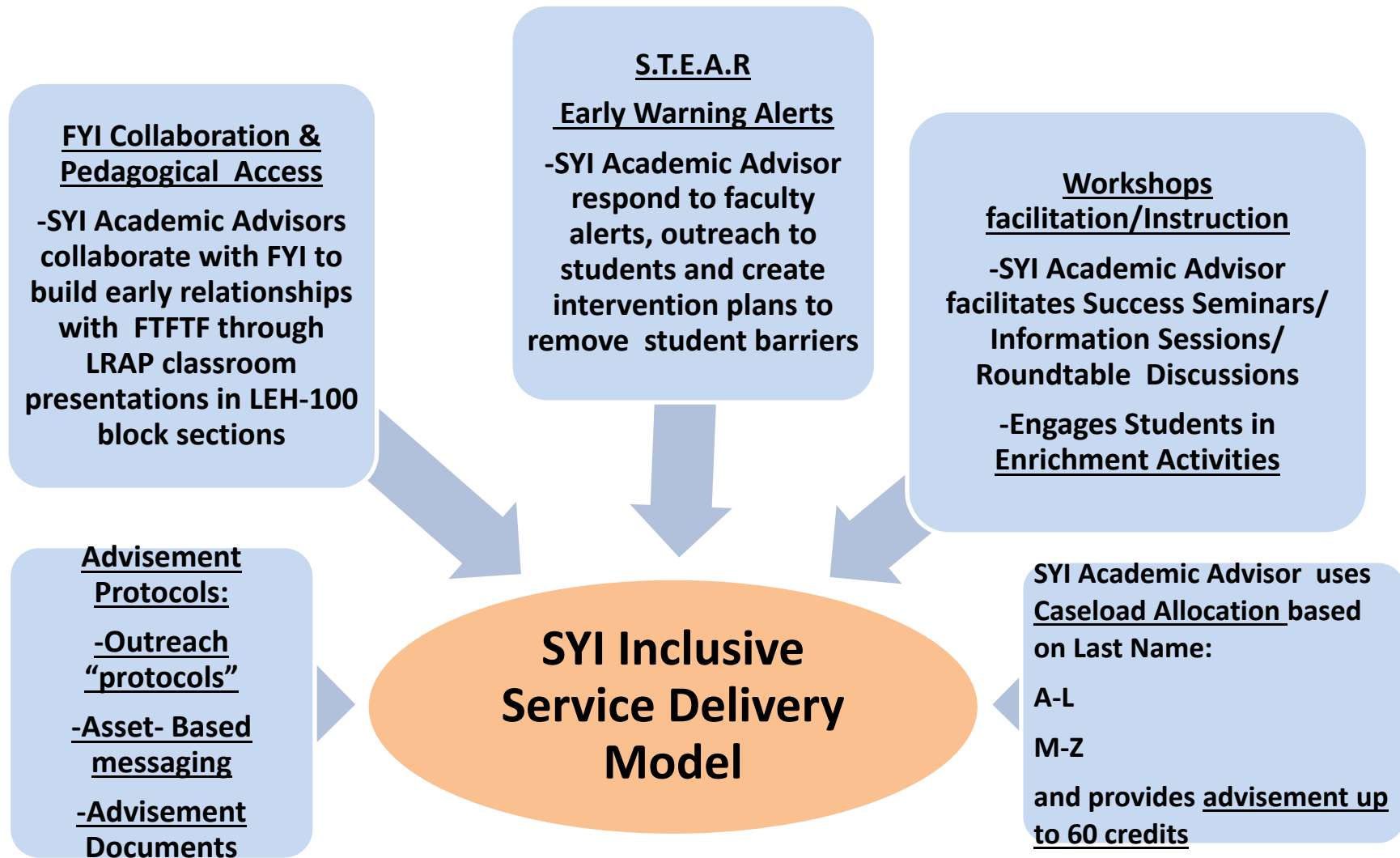
What is Required?

- **Early Identification of “At-risk” Students**: Faculty identify “At-Risk” students - first 6 weeks of semester; collaborate with academic advisors who outreach to students
- **Continuous Intervention**: Advisors create student intervention plan; refer students for support services
- **Intensive Support Services**: Students receive: tutoring, supplemental instruction, advising, personal counseling etc.

Proposed Outcomes:

- Increase students' academic progress and success
- Improve students' persistence and rate of progress towards graduation
- Increases communication between students, faculty, administrators and support services
- Increases student utilization of student offices

SYI Inclusive Service Delivery Strategies to Remove Student Barriers



SYI Services- Removing Student Barriers

Academic Advising

1. Provide advisement up to 60 credits to 2nd semester freshman, sophomores, and transfer students including “At-Risk” students
2. Provide intentional, intrusive, one-to-one advisement on degree requirements, selection of major, prelim graduation audit

Counseling

1. Crisis intervention
2. Mental health services
3. Workshops on depression /anxiety
4. Provides psycho-social emotional support
5. Clinical services

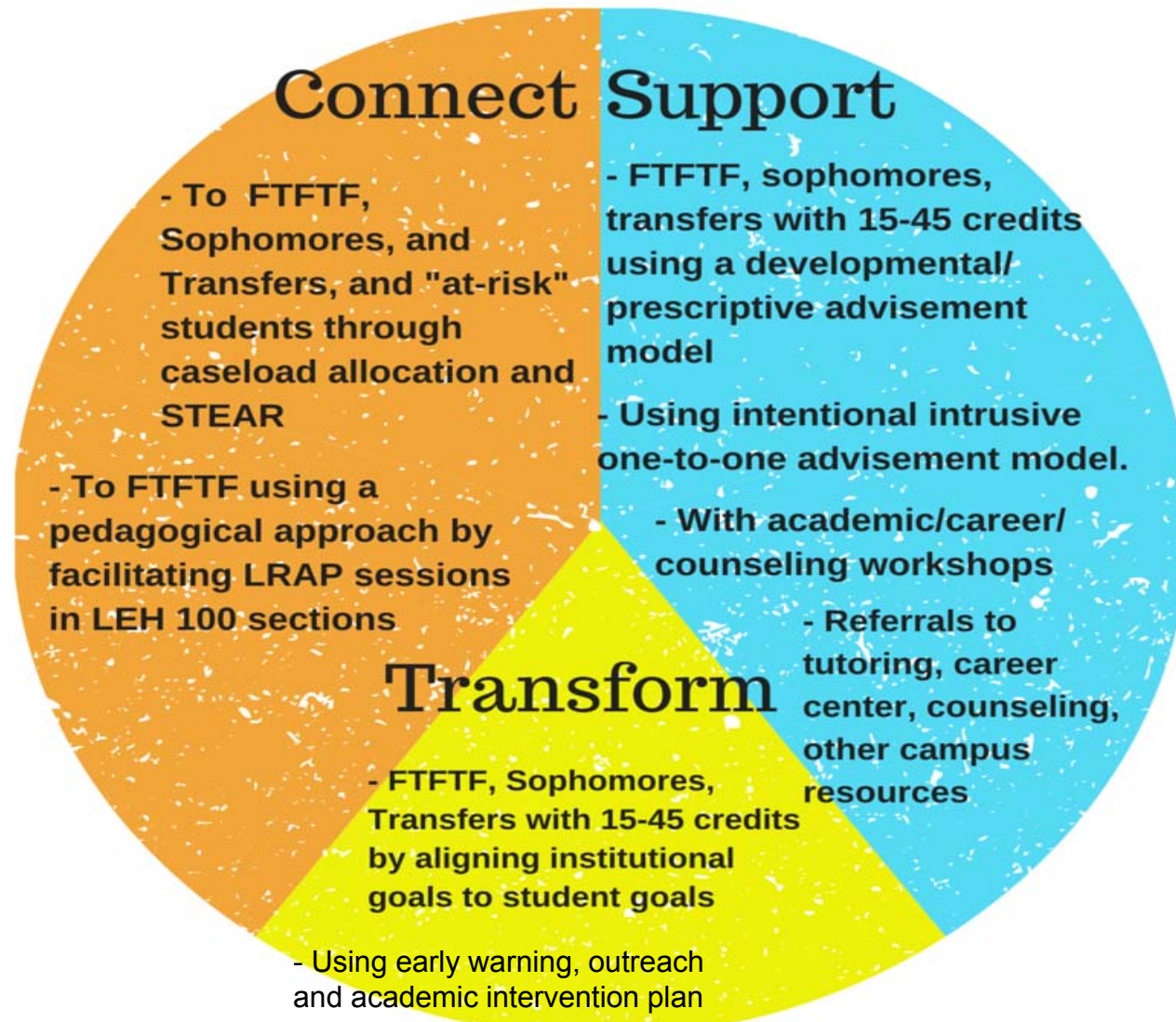
Career Advisement

1. Individualized / group career counseling
2. Facilitates career development workshops (ex. job readiness trainings)
3. Administers and interprets career & vocational Instruments such as:
 - *Strong Interest inventory
 - * Myers/Briggs
 - * Focus II
4. Monitors Pre-Majors Clubs
5. Personal Skills Development

Support Services

1. Tutoring
2. Supplemental Instruction
3. HESI Pre-Nursing Preparation Workshop in collaboration with the Nursing Dept
4. Peer Mentoring- CREAR Futuros
5. Summer Math-104 Support Workshop in collaboration with the Math & Computer Science Dept

SYI Advisement Model- Guiding Principles



SYI Academic Advisement Protocols/Messaging/Documents:

- **Build and Promote Good Student Relationship:**
- **-Implement Outreach Protocols:**
- -Accommodate Students - After Hours/Weekend
- -Multiple Forms of Communication: emails, calls, letters, contact professor, etc.
- **Asset-Based Messaging:** Respect, student first, results driven, etc.
- **Advisement Forms:**
- -Beginning of Semester Questionnaire: Goal-setting...
- -End-of-Semester Reflection

Promote Students' Academic Success: Academic Advising Outcomes

**F'12-F'13
(Year 1)**

of advising
appointments
= **920**

unique
students
served = **245**

**F'13-F'14
(Year 2)**

of advising
appointments =
2,250
**(145% increase over
the previous year)**

unique
students served =
520
**(112% increase over
the previous year)**

Student Tracking Early Alert Retention (S.T.E.A.R)- A Snapshot

- Is a user friendly, web-based Early Warning System
- Is accessible both on-campus and off-campus through Lehman Connect – campus portal
- Is easily navigated and can be used by:
 1. Faculty
 2. Academic Advisor
 3. Administrator (resource)

How Does the S.T.E.A.R System Work?

Step 1:

- An instructor identifies from an academic alert checklist issues pertaining to a specific student in areas of performance, attendance and behavior and activate an alert

Step 2:

- Students then receive an automated email informing them that an alert has been generated on a specific issue and needs to be addressed immediately.

Step 3:

- Concurrently, the academic advisor assigned to the student receives the same alert and outreach to the student via phone/email/snail mail/etc.

Step 4:

- When the advisor reaches the student, an action plan is developed with constructive interventions which are then implemented based on the information provided by the instructor who submitted the alert

Step 5:

- The instructor has the opportunity to check the outcome of alerts and edit, add or update notes.
- Advisor will also make referrals to other campus resources and supports.
- Campus resources and supports will access system and follow up with students.

Step 6:

- Lehman College Faculty, Advisors and Resources collaborate through use of the STEAR system so that students receive a holistic, intrusive intervention that promote their success, persistence, retention, and graduation.

"Alert" Checklist

Academic Performance Indicators

- Lack Essential Skills (e.g. reading, writing, math, science, language, etc.)
- Insufficient Prerequisite Knowledge
- Failing Test or Quiz Scores
- Missed Test or Quiz
- Missed or Incomplete Class Assignments
- Inattentive in Class

Attendance/ Participation Indicators

- Never Attended
- Two or more Absences
- Medical Absences
- Frequent Tardiness
- Little or No Class Participation
- Unprepared for class
- Struggling with the pace of class

Behavioral Indicators

- Disrespectful Toward Others
- Disruptive/Talking Excessively in Class
- Aggressive/Loud Behavior
- Abrupt Changes in Behavior
- Poor Attitude
- Personal or Emotional Difficulty

Sample “Alert” Email Sent to Students

Dear FirstName LastName:

Your instructor, *FirstName LastName*, in *Course Title Description*, has notified the Early Warning Coordinator that you have NOT MET THE ACADEMIC STANDARDS of this course which places you “at-risk.”

However, this is your opportunity to contact your academic advisor immediately to create an intervention plan to help you to achieve academic success. If you do not know your academic advisor, please send an email to the following address: early.alert@lehman.cuny.edu, type in “who is my academic advisor?” and you will get a response within 24 hours.

In the meantime, we encourage you to take the following action to improve your performance:

- Speak with your instructor, and ask them for ideas on how to improve your grade.
- If you are unable to attend class, please contact your instructor via email, phone or utilize office hours.
- Visit the Campus Resource site at <http://www.lehman.edu/academics/tutoring-support.php> to access study skills, free tutoring services, and supplemental instruction program for specific classes.

We understand that there are many factors that may be contributing to your performance in class, and that every student’s situation is different. We are confident that with the right kind of support and guidance; you will be able to successfully complete this course.

Student Tracking Early Alert Retention System (S.T.E.A.R) - Outcomes

Fall 2014

**“live”
rollout**

of faculty RSVP to attend training = **59**

of faculty attended training = **52**

**(52/59 = 88%)
response rate**

of alerts triggered = **143**

**(Based on 3 indicators:
academic, behavioral,
attendance)**

**(137 Unique Students
identified as “at-risk”)**

Spring 2015

**“Branding plus
Enhancements”**

of faculty
trained = **68**

**(Includes F’14
trained faculty)**

of alerts triggered = **172**

**(19% increase over
F’14)**

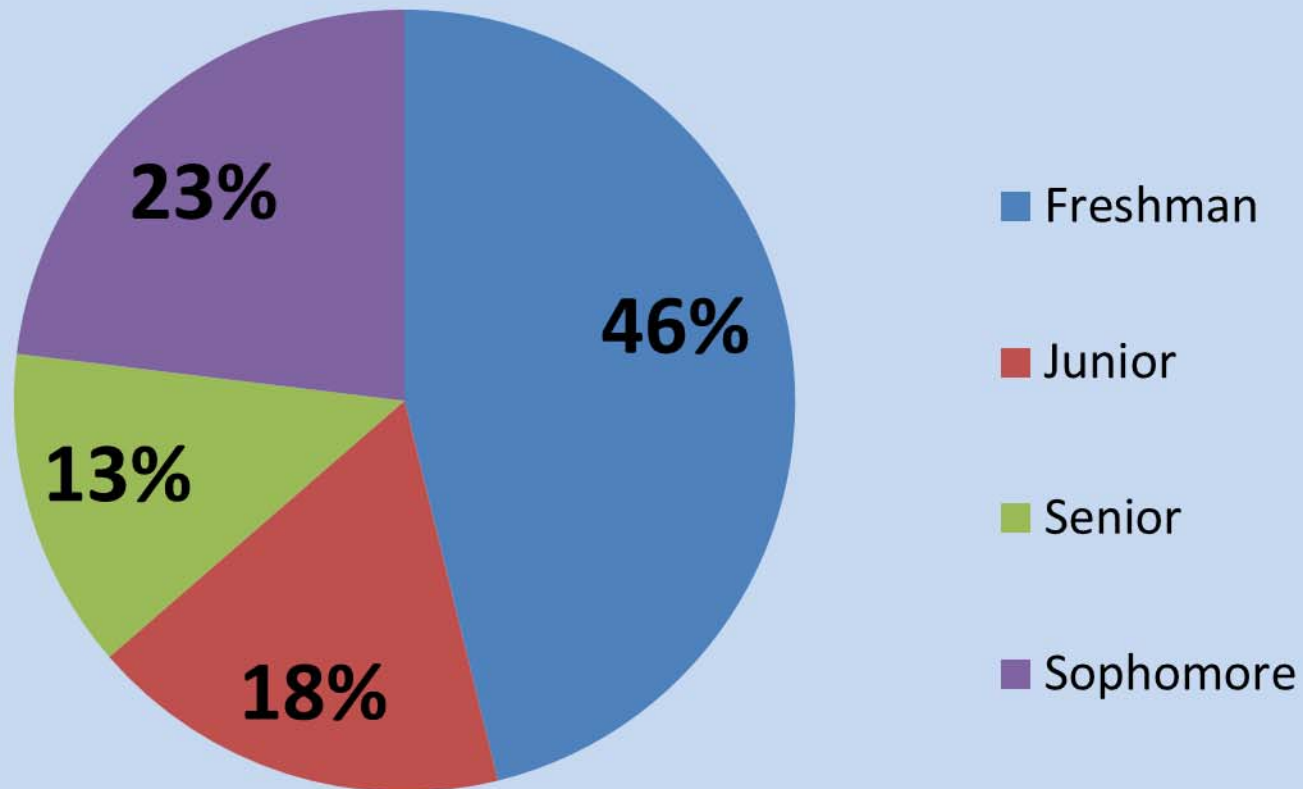
**(167 unique students
identified as “at-risk”)**

S.T.E.A.R Alerts - Demographic Data

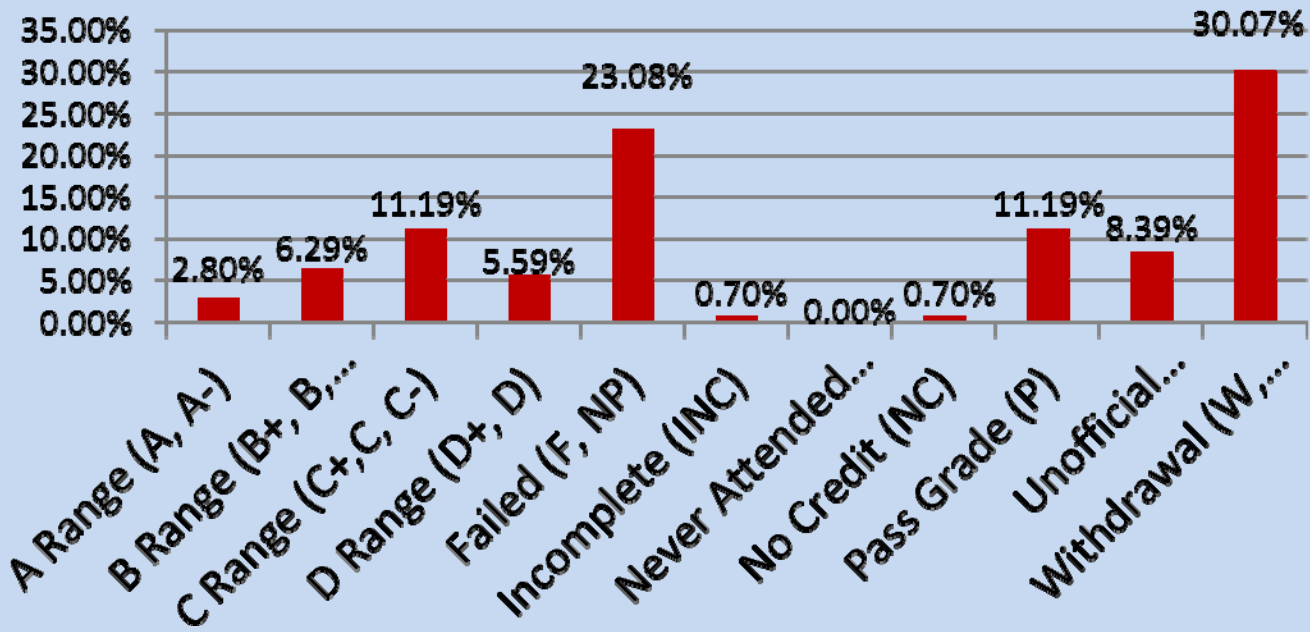
Number of Unique Latino Students who received a STEAR Alert:

| STEAR Alerts | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| | Fall 2014 | Spring 2015 |
| Total Unique Students | 137 students | 167 students |
| Latino Students | 86 students | 112 students |
| Percentage of Latinos students | 62.77% (86/137) | 67.07% (112/167) |

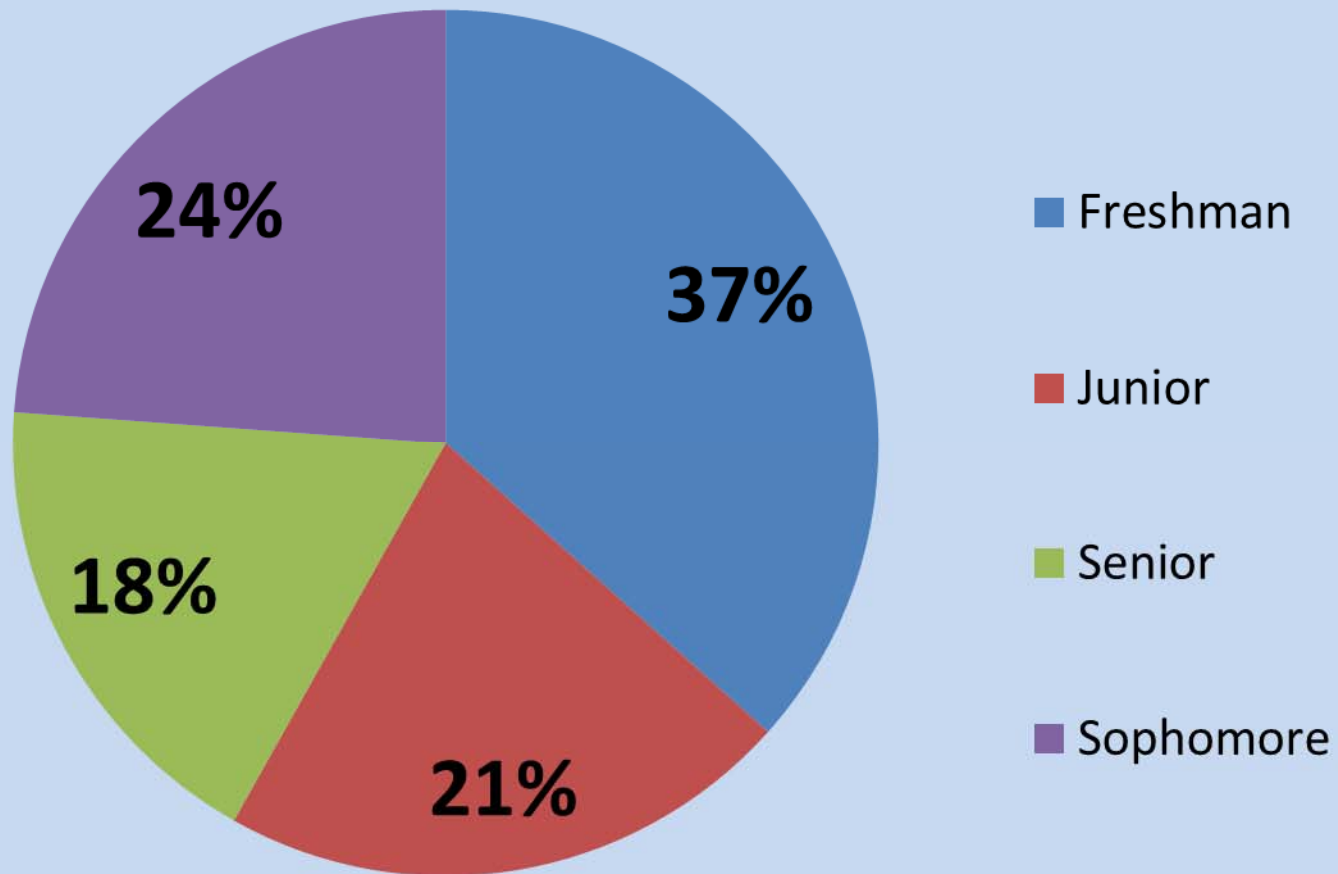
Fa'14 Alerts by Student Academic Level



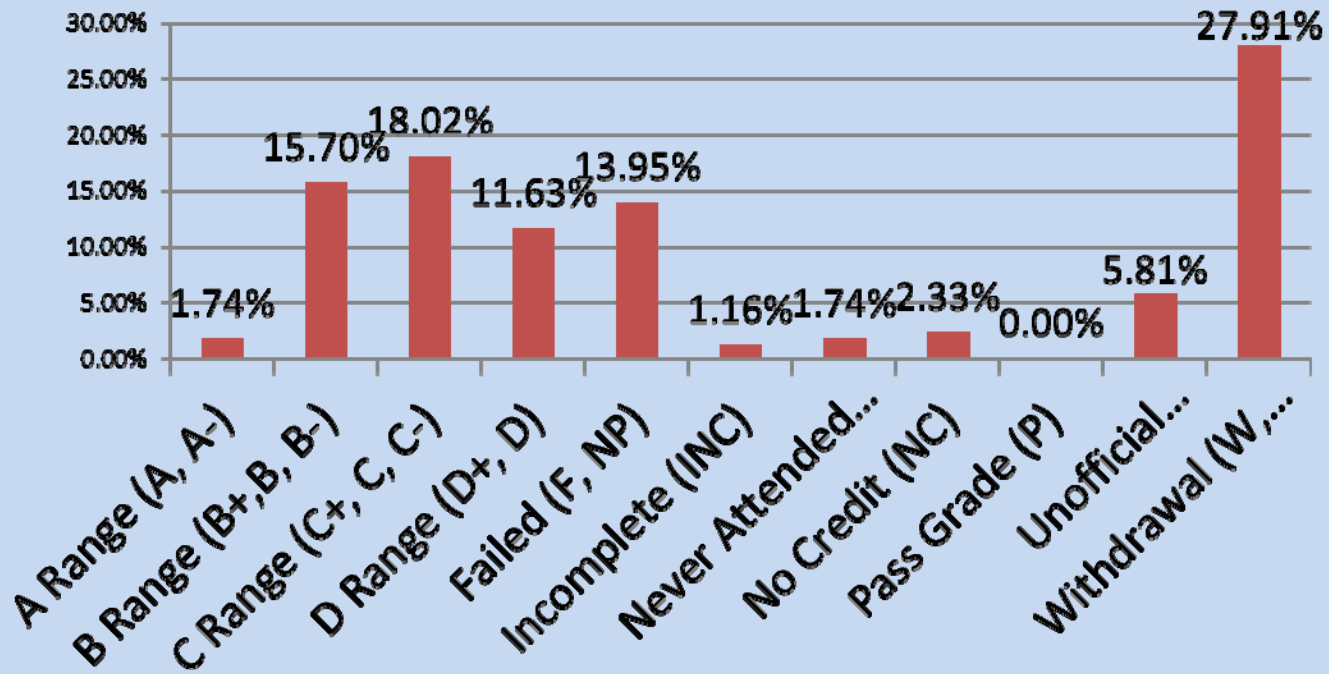
Fa'14 Alert Outcomes With Final End-Of-Term Grades



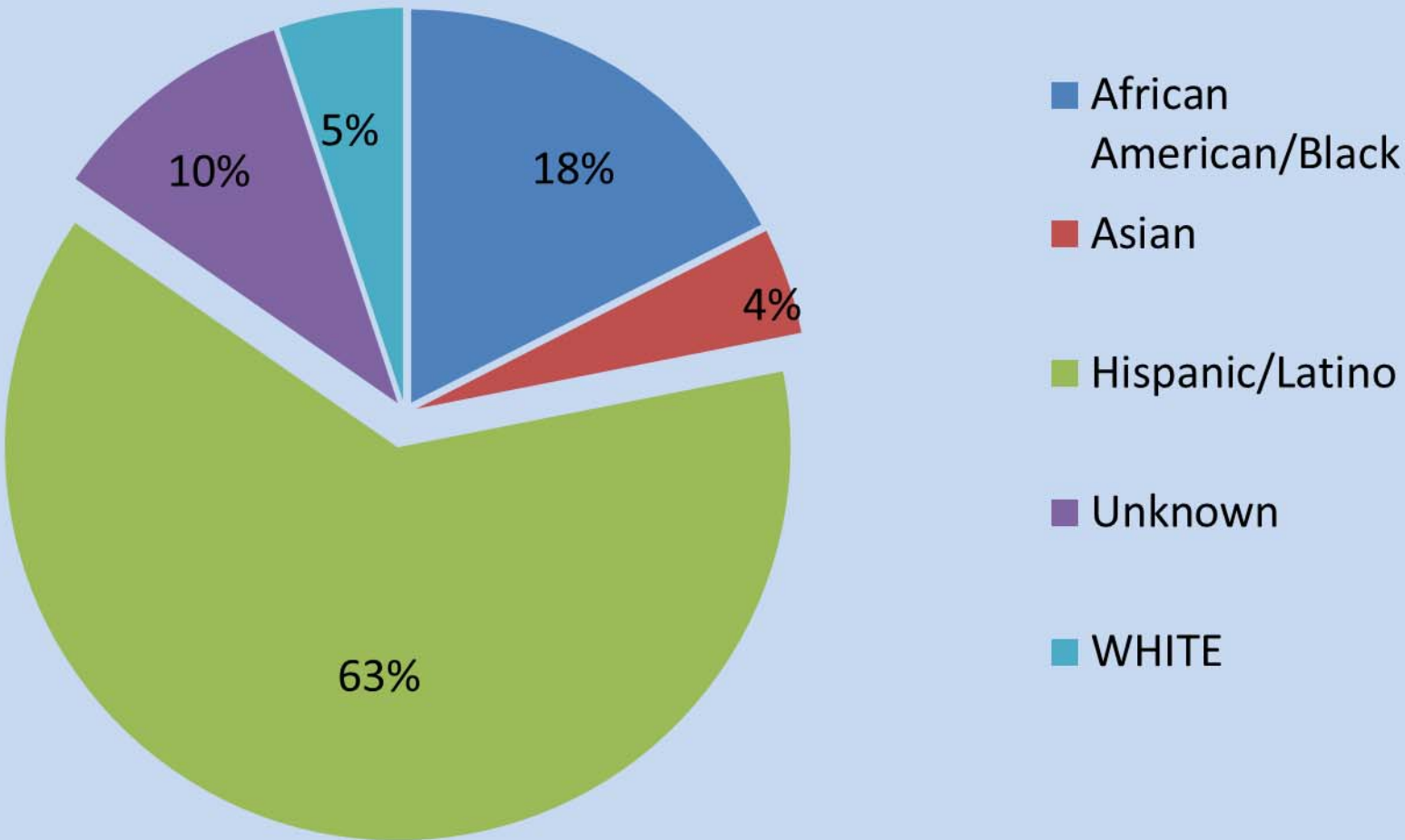
Sp'15 Alerts By Student Academic Level



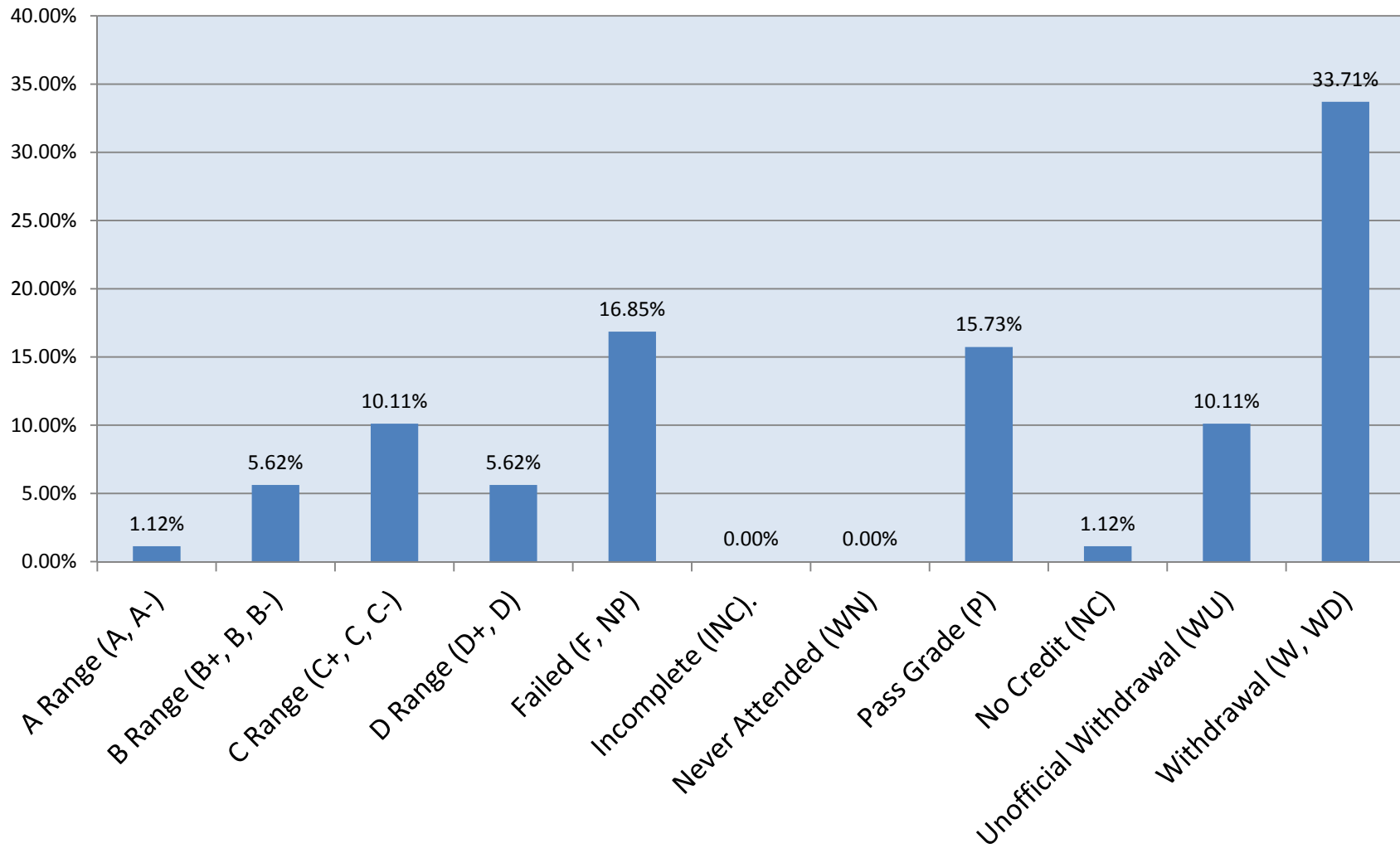
Sp'15 Alert Outcomes With Final End-of-Term Grades



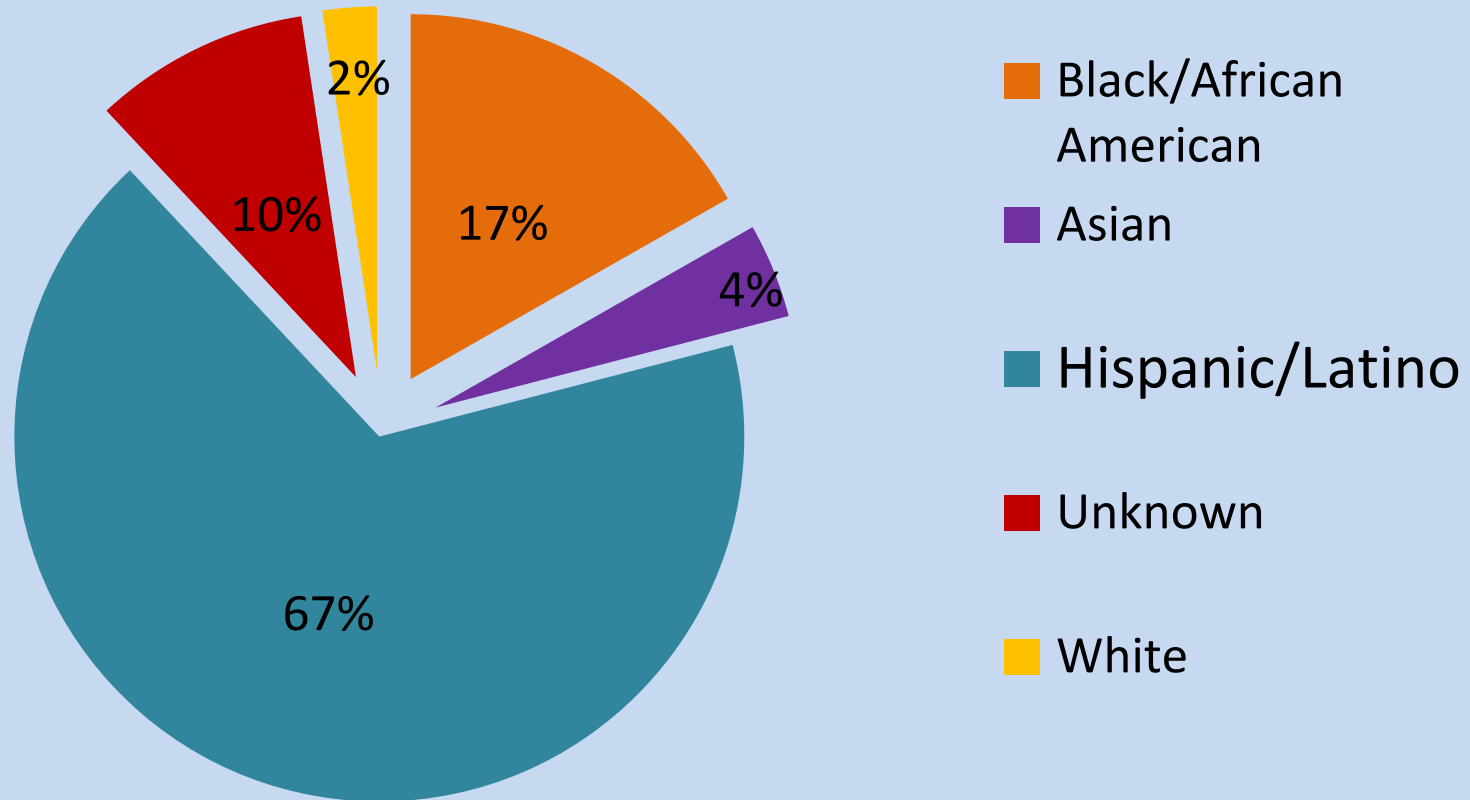
Fa'14 STEAR Alerts - Breakdown by Ethnicity



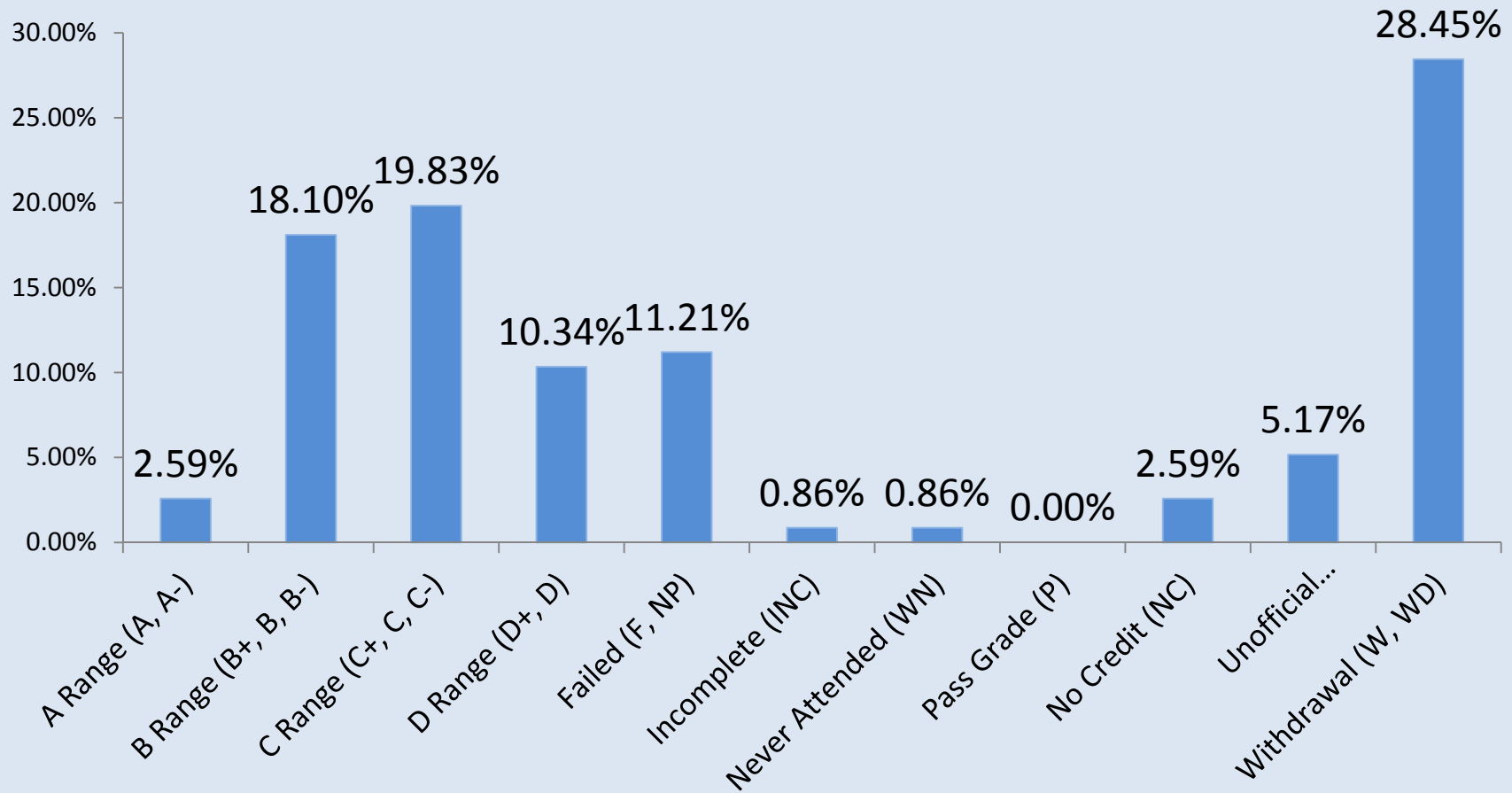
Fa'14 STEAR Alerts - Breakdown by Final Grade Ranges for Latinos



Sp'15 STEAR Alerts - Breakdown by Ethnicity



Sp'15 STEAR Alerts – Breakdown by Final Grade Ranges for Latinos



Promote Students' Academic Success- Career Advising

**F'12-F'13
(Year 1)**

of
appointments =
129

unique
students served
= **78**

**F'13-F'14
(Year 2)**

of advising
appointments = **267**
**(107% increase over
previous year)**

unique students
served = **145**
**(86% increase over
the previous year)**

Promote Students' Academic Success- Personal Counseling/Tutoring

**F'12-F'13
(Year 1)**

of unique students attending tutoring/Total Hours = **N/A**

unique students attending personal counseling = **25**

**F'13-F'14
(Year 2)**

of unique students attending tutoring/total hours = **226/1,016**

unique students attending personal counseling = **62**
(148% increase over the previous year)

Promote Students' Academic Success- Majors/Minors Fair & Pre-Majors Clubs

"Very helpful...I am more educated of what procedures to follow to accomplish my goals."

- Major Fair Attendee

Majors/Minors Fair:

- **267 Students** and **70 Faculty/Staff (337 total participants)** attended Majors/Minor Fair in Year 2 (F'13).
- **190 students responded to a feedback survey (190/267=71% response rate):**
- **95% (181/190)** of respondents said that the event was well-advertised.
- **73% (139/190)** of respondents said the Majors/Minors Fair *Met or Exceeded* their expectations.

➤ Pre-majors Clubs added in Year Two:

Pre-Dance

Pre-Biology

Pre-Computer Science & Math

Pre-Major Clubs:

- Pre-Major Clubs hosted a total of **15** major exploration events and a Pre-Major Welcome Back event in Year 2 (**353** students attended)

Year One Pre-Majors clubs:

Pre-Nursing

Pre-Law

Pre-Business

Pre-Psychology

Promote Students' Academic Success- Student Workshops

SYI hosted **(5)** Academic workshops & Co-hosted **(3)** workshops in Year 2.

Results from 157 surveys:
(43%) Met or **(55%)** Exceeded workshop expectations

SYI staff scheduled LRAP presentations in 26 blocks/26 sections in the LEH-100 courses starting in fall 2014 targeting First-time, Full-time Freshmen (FTFTF)

Counseling Workshops: **(4)** held during Year 2:

(2) *First Generation College Student Workshops*

Managing Expectations: The Role of Culture and Family

Perfectionism & Procrastination (LEH 100)

Career Workshops:

(3) held during Year 2:

Who do you think you are? Who do you want to be?

Got Skills?

Your Journey to Success

SYI Persistence & Retention Outcomes-



**National Average Sophomore-to-Junior
(5th semester) retention rate = 55% ***

**SYI F'12 cohort (FTFTF) Sophomore-to-
Junior (5th semester) retention rate
=68%****

**(*Visible Solutions for Invisible Students: Helping
Sophomores Succeed – Jerry Pattengale)**

(Lehman 2014 Databook)**

Sophomore Year Initiative Program Services-
Removing Barriers to Empower Students

A Case Study