



Fall 2010 Freshman Cohort Non-returning Students: What do we know?

Executive Summary

The following report provides an analysis of 572 first-time full-time degree seeking freshmen in the University of South Alabama (USA) Fall 2010 freshman cohort who did not return to USA in Fall 2011. Of these non-returning students, 203 (35%) transferred to another institution prior to Fall 2011 and 369 (65%) “stopped out” or did not enroll in another college or university.

- Results indicated a large majority of transfer students transferred to another institution with one or more of the following characteristics: public, a two year institution, and/or located in Alabama, with the majority (65%) transferring to a community college.
- Findings showed a large percentage based differential between students who “stopped out” with a USA GPA of 2.0 or lower (27%) or students with less than six hours earned at USA (22%) and students who transferred and had a similar USA GPA or a similar number of USA earned hours.
- Indicators for students at greater risk to “stop out” instead of transferring to another institution included living off campus (26%), students of local origin from Mobile or Baldwin County (25%), male (15%), attendance at the August session or a Transfer new student orientation session (13%), and high school GPA between 2.51-3.0 (10%).
- 50% of non-returning students who “stopped out” attended the August session, Freshman Session 5, or a Transfer¹ new student orientation session. Students attending one of these orientation sessions should be targeted early with interventions to help them persist and return to USA.

Overview

The following report provides an analysis of 572 first-time full-time degree seeking freshmen in the University of South Alabama (USA) Fall 2010 freshman cohort who did not return to USA in Fall 2011. The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) was used to identify whether non-returning students transferred to another institution or “stopped out” and did not enroll in another higher education institution in Fall 2011. While the preference is for students to return and persist at USA, a student who transferred to another institution could be considered a secondary measure of student success. With the NSC receiving data from over 3,300 (93%) of all colleges and universities in the United States, students who were not identified as transfer students by the NSC were unlikely to be enrolled at another college or university and had “stopped out” of higher education. This report provides comparisons between 203 non-returning students who transferred to another institution prior to Fall 2011 and 369 non-returning students who “stopped out” and did not enroll at another college or university.

Profile of Non-returning Student Who “Stopped Out”

- No other scholarship² (85%)

¹ Five of the 1,654 students in the 2010 freshman cohort attended one of three Transfer orientation sessions held in the evening to accommodate adult/working students. Since the persistence rates were similar for the August orientation group and the Transfer orientation group, the two groups were combined for this analysis.

² Military/ROTC, vocational rehab, employment funded, prepaid AL, MS, or FL tuition, etc.

- USA GPA of 2.0 or lower (76%)
- 18 years old (73%)
- No freshman scholarship³ (70%)
- White (66%)
- From Mobile or Baldwin County (64%)
- Lived off-campus (61%)
- Male (56%)
- Earned zero to six USA credit hours (41%)
- High school GPA between 2.51-3.0 (33%)
- Attended the August/Transfer or Freshman Session 5 new student orientation sessions (25%)
- ACT Composite score of 19-20 or 21-23 (24%)

Profile of Non-returning Student Who Transferred

- No other scholarship (86%)
- 18 years old (83%)
- Lived on-campus (65%)
- No freshman scholarship (61%)
- Female (59%)
- White (58%)
- USA GPA of 2.0 or lower (49%)
- From Mobile or Baldwin County (39%)
- High school GPA between 3.51-4.0 (37%)
- ACT Composite score of 21-23 (29%)
- Earned 12.5-18 USA credit hours (22%)
- Attended the Freshman Session 2 or Freshman Session 5 new student orientation sessions (19%)

Where Non-returning Students Transferred

Of the 203 non-returning students who transferred, a large majority transferred to an institution with one or more of three characteristics (see Table 1 and Table 2). The transfer institution was likely: 1) public (92%), 2) a two year institution (65%), and/or 3) located in Alabama (62%). Mississippi (19%) was also a likely transfer destination of the non-returning students.

Table 1: Control and Type of Institution Where USA Students Transferred

Public or Private Institution	Count	%	2 or 4 Year Institution	Count	%
Public Institution	186	92%	2 Year Institution	131	65%
Private Institution	17	8%	4 Year Institution	72	35%

Table 2: Top States Where USA Students Transferred

Rank	State	Count	%
1	Alabama	126	62%
2	Mississippi	38	19%
3	Florida	13	6%
4	Louisiana	3	1%
5	Arizona	2	1%
5	Georgia	2	1%
5	Ohio	2	1%

³ Bay Area, Honors, Mitchell, Presidential, or Starnes merit based scholarships

The most common two year transfer institutions of choice were Faulkner State Community College (32), Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (30), and Bishop State Community College (23). Of the four year universities, Auburn University (10), Pensacola State College (7), and University of Alabama at Birmingham (7) were the most common transfer destination (see Table 3).

Table 3: Top Institutions Where USA Students Transferred

Rank	College	Count	%
1	Faulkner State Community College	32	16
2	Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College	30	15
3	Bishop State Community College	23	11
4	Auburn University	10	5
5	Calhoun Community College	7	3
5	Pensacola State College	7	3
5	University of Alabama at Birmingham	7	3
8	Auburn University at Montgomery	4	2
8	ITT Technical Institute	4	2
8	Lawson State Community College	4	2
8	University of Alabama	4	2

Comparison of Non-returning Transfer Students to Students Who “Stopped Out”

Multiple characteristics of non-returning students were compared to determine what characteristics showed large percentage based differentials between 369 non-returning students who “stopped out” compared to 203 non-returning students who transferred. The following table displays characteristics with percentage based differentials of 10% or greater between students who transferred and students who “stopped out” (see Table 4 or complete data tables found in the Appendix). The USA GPA (first) and number of USA earned hours (fourth) were two of the four characteristics with subgroups that showed the greatest differential between non-returning students who “stopped out” and students who transferred.

- 76% of the non-returning students who “stopped out” had a USA GPA of 2.0 or lower (259) compared to 49% of non-returning students who transferred (97). Conversely, 19% of students who transferred had a USA GPA between 2.51-3.0 (37) compared to 7% of students who “stopped out” (24) and 12% of students who transferred had a USA GPA between 3.01-3.5 (24) compared to 2% of students who “stopped out” (7).
- 41% of non-returning students who “stopped out” had zero to six USA earned hours (141) compared to 19% of non-returning students who transferred (37). On the other hand, 16% of students who transferred had 24.5-30 USA earned hours (31) compared to 5% of students who “stopped out” (16).

Table 4: Greatest Differentials Between Non-Returner Transfers and Stop Outs

Top within Group Characteristics	Transferred (n=203)	% Transferred	Stopped Out (n=369)	% Stopped Out	% Difference Between Transferred & Stopped Out
<i>USA GPA (Note: n=343 Stopped Out; 196 Transferred)</i>					
2.0 or lower	97	49%	259	76%	-27%
2.51-3.0	37	19%	24	7%	+12%
3.01-3.5	24	12%	7	2%	+10%
<i>Housing</i>					
Off-Campus	72	35%	225	61%	-26%
<i>Region</i>					
Mobile/Baldwin County	79	39%	236	64%	-25%
Mississippi Service Area	37	18%	23	6%	+12%
<i># USA Earned Hours (Note: n=343 Stopped Out; 196 Transferred)</i>					
0-6 hours	37	19%	141	41%	-22%
24.5-30 hours	31	16%	16	5%	+11%
<i>Gender</i>					
Male	84	41%	205	56%	-15%
<i>High School GPA (Note: n=339 Stopped Out; 197 Transferred)</i>					
2.51-3.0	46	23%	112	33%	-10%
3.51-4.0	72	37%	75	22%	+15%
<i>Orientation Session</i>					
August/Transfer Orientation	24	12%	94	25%	-13%
<i>Age</i>					
18 years old	168	83%	271	73%	+10%
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>					
African-American	67	33%	86	23%	+10%
Note: Cells are shaded in yellow where % transferred compared to % stopped out was positive and greater or equal to 10% while cells are shaded in red where % transferred compared to % stopped out was negative and greater than or equal to 10%.					

Results showed living off campus (second) and region where the student originated from (third) were two of the four comparison groups with the greatest percentage based differential between non-returning students who “stopped out” and non-returning students who transferred. Students who lived off campus or who originated from Mobile or Baldwin County were much more likely to “stop out” than to transfer to another institution.

- 61% of non-returning students who “stopped out” lived off campus (225) compared to 35% of non-returning students who transferred (72).
- 64% of non-returning students who “stopped out” came from Mobile or Baldwin County (236) compared to 39% of non-returning students who transferred (79).

Three other comparison groups showed percentage based differentials greater than or equal to 10% between students who “stopped out” and students who transferred. These other three comparison groups were: 1) gender, 2) orientation session, and 3) high school GPA.

- 56% of non-returning students who “stopped out” were male (205) compared to 41% of non-returning students who transferred (84).
- 25% of non-returning students who “stopped out” attended the August or a Transfer new student orientation session (94) compared to 12% of non-returning students who transferred (24).
- 33% of non-returning students who transferred had a high school GPA between 2.51-3.0 (112) compared to 23% of non-returning students who “stopped out” (46).

Implications

Results showed a large percentage based differential between students who “stopped out” with a USA GPA of 2.0 or lower (27%) or students with less than six USA earned hours (22%) compared to students who transferred. These students may have benefited from programs such as intrusive advising and peer mentoring to improve their odds of persistence at USA or to prepare them to transfer to another institution. While the preference is to encourage USA freshmen students to continue and persist at USA, a student who successfully transfers to another institution could also be considered a secondary measure of success compared to a complete “stop out” from higher education.

Early indicators for students at greater risk to “stop out” instead of transferring to another institution included living off campus (26%), students of local origin from Mobile or Baldwin County (25%), male (15%), attendance at the August or a Transfer new student orientation session (13%), and high school GPA between 2.51-3.0 (10%). Students with these characteristics were less likely to transfer to another institution.

Of non-returning students who “stopped out”, 50 percent attended the August session, Freshman Session 5, or a Transfer new student orientation session. Students attending one of these new student orientation sessions should be targeted early with interventions to help them persist and return to USA, assuming they are capable of college work.

APPENDIX

Crosstabs of Fall 2010 Freshman Cohort Non-returning Students

USA GPA * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
USA GPA	2.0 or lower	Count	259	97	356
		% within Transferred from USA	76%	49%	66%
	2.01-2.5	Count	39	22	61
		% within Transferred from USA	11%	11%	11%
	2.51-3.0	Count	24	37	61
		% within Transferred from USA	7%	19%	11%
	3.01-3.5	Count	7	24	31
		% within Transferred from USA	2%	12%	6%
	3.51-4.0	Count	14	16	30
		% within Transferred from USA	4%	8%	6%
Total		Count	343	196	539
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%

Region * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Region	Mobile or Baldwin County	Count	236	79	315
		% within Transferred from USA	64%	39%	55%
	Rest of Alabama	Count	76	60	136
		% within Transferred from USA	21%	30%	24%
	Mississippi Service Area	Count	23	37	60
		% within Transferred from USA	6%	18%	10%
	Florida Service Area	Count	15	8	23
		% within Transferred from USA	4%	4%	4%
	Rest of United States	Count	11	17	28
		% within Transferred from USA	3%	8%	5%
	International	Count	8	2	10
		% within Transferred from USA	2%	1%	2%
Total		Count	369	203	572
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%

USA Hours Earned * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
USA Hours Earned	0-6 hours	Count	141	37	178
		% within Transferred from USA	41%	19%	33%
	6.5-12 hours	Count	80	35	115
		% within Transferred from USA	23%	18%	21%
	12.5-18 hours	Count	57	44	101
		% within Transferred from USA	17%	22%	19%
	18.5-24 hours	Count	39	30	69
		% within Transferred from USA	11%	15%	13%
	24.5-30 hours	Count	16	31	47
		% within Transferred from USA	5%	16%	9%
	30.5 or more hours	Count	10	19	29
		% within Transferred from USA	3%	10%	5%
Total		Count	343	196	539
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%

Housing * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Housing	Off Campus	Count	225	72	297
		% within Transferred from USA	61%	35%	52%
	On Campus	Count	144	131	275
		% within Transferred from USA	39%	65%	48%
Total		Count	369	203	572
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%

HS GPA * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
HS GPA	2.5 or lower	Count	51	13	64
		% within Transferred from USA	15%	7%	12%
	2.51-3.0	Count	112	46	158
		% within Transferred from USA	33%	23%	29%
	3.01-3.5	Count	101	66	167
		% within Transferred from USA	30%	34%	31%
	3.51-4.0	Count	75	72	147
		% within Transferred from USA	22%	37%	27%
Total		Count	339	197	536
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%

Age * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Age	18 years old	Count	271	168	439
		% within Transferred from USA	73%	83%	77%
	17 years or younger	Count	21	13	34
		% within Transferred from USA	6%	6%	6%
	19 years old	Count	36	18	54
		% within Transferred from USA	10%	9%	9%
	20 years or older	Count	41	4	45
		% within Transferred from USA	11%	2%	8%
Total	Count		369	203	572
	% within Transferred from USA		100%	100%	100%

Orientation * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Orientation	August/Transfer Orientation	Count	94	24	118
		% within Transferred from USA	25%	12%	21%
	May Orientation	Count	12	8	20
		% within Transferred from USA	3%	4%	3%
	Freshman Session 1	Count	34	31	65
		% within Transferred from USA	9%	15%	11%
	Freshman Session 2	Count	37	39	76
		% within Transferred from USA	10%	19%	13%
	Freshman Session 3	Count	41	28	69
		% within Transferred from USA	11%	14%	12%
	Freshman Session 4	Count	60	35	95
		% within Transferred from USA	16%	17%	17%
	Freshman Session 5	Count	91	38	129
		% within Transferred from USA	25%	19%	23%
Total	Count		369	203	572
	% within Transferred from USA		100%	100%	100%

ACT Composite * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
ACT	18 or lower	Count	69	34	103
		% within Transferred from USA	22%	19%	21%
	19-20	Count	78	41	119
		% within Transferred from USA	24%	23%	24%
	21-23	Count	78	52	130
		% within Transferred from USA	24%	29%	26%
	24-26	Count	64	38	102
		% within Transferred from USA	20%	21%	20%
	27-29	Count	23	14	37
		% within Transferred from USA	7%	8%	7%
	30 or higher	Count	7	2	9
		% within Transferred from USA	2%	1%	2%
Total		Count	319	181	500
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%

College * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
College	AH	Count	44	42	86
		% within Transferred from USA	12%	21%	15%
	AS	Count	163	66	229
		% within Transferred from USA	44%	33%	40%
	BU	Count	24	16	40
		% within Transferred from USA	7%	8%	7%
	CS	Count	19	5	24
		% within Transferred from USA	5%	2%	4%
	ED	Count	19	11	30
		% within Transferred from USA	5%	5%	5%
	EG	Count	52	27	79
		% within Transferred from USA	14%	13%	14%
	NU	Count	48	36	84
		% within Transferred from USA	13%	18%	15%
Total		Count	369	203	572
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%

Freshman Scholarship * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Freshman Scholarship	No	Count	260	124	384
		% within Transferred from USA	70%	61%	67%
	Yes	Count	109	79	188
		% within Transferred from USA	30%	39%	33%
Total		Count	369	203	572
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%

Other Scholarship * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Other Scholarship	No	Count	314	175	489
		% within Transferred from USA	85%	86%	85%
	Yes	Count	55	28	83
		% within Transferred from USA	15%	14%	15%
Total		Count	369	203	572
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%

Race * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Race	White	Count	242	117	359
		% within Transferred from USA	66%	58%	63%
	African-American	Count	86	67	153
		% within Transferred from USA	23%	33%	27%
	Asian	Count	6	4	10
		% within Transferred from USA	2%	2%	2%
	Hispanic	Count	4	5	9
		% within Transferred from USA	1%	2%	2%
	Non-Resident Alien	Count	8	2	10
		% within Transferred from USA	2%	1%	2%
	Other	Count	23	8	31
		% within Transferred from USA	6%	4%	5%
Total		Count	369	203	572
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%

Gender * Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Gender	Female	Count	164	119	283
		% within Transferred from USA	44%	59%	49%
	Male	Count	205	84	289
		% within Transferred from USA	56%	41%	51%
Total		Count	369	203	572
		% within Transferred from USA	100%	100%	100%