Introduction
Understanding the complex process of persistence, retention and student departure remains one of the primary goals of universities and of national associations charged with monitoring the progress of degree completion rates of college students. In light of drop out rates, and increased public scrutiny on student learning, universities are struggling more than ever to improve the degree completion rate of students while providing a quality educational experience.

This course is designed to introduce students to several of the leading theories and studies on retention and the college impact literature. Class discussions will focus on the impact of the models as well as their limitations to address the needs of a diverse student body. Although the primary focus is on traditional four-year colleges and universities students will have an opportunity to briefly explore issues that impact the community college environment and the transition of high school students to the collegiate environment. Students will examine theory to practice issues by examining institutional practices, policies and programs.

What students can expect to gain from this course.
1. An understanding of the leading theories and college impact models and how they inform policy decisions and program development.

2. An examination of how institutional practices inform research on retention and ways in which institutions have employed retention methods.

3. The role and relationship of the faculty, peer interaction and the importance of institutional environment on student success particularly the classroom environment.
**Academic Integrity**
Your work should be characterized by academic integrity and honesty. All students are expected to abide by the code of academic integrity throughout this course. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Student Honor Council. The full text of the code is available on the web at [www.inform.umd.edu/IPQ](http://www.inform.umd.edu/IPQ). If you have any questions regarding the university's policy on academic integrity, please talk to me.

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
If you have a documented disability that is relevant to the work that you will do in this course, please contact me as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

**Religious Beliefs and Practices**
Students will not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs. Whenever possible, students will be given reasonable time to make up any academic assignment that is missed due to participation in a religious observance. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor as soon as possible of any intended absences for religious observances.

**Required Readings**

**Books**


**Articles/Chapters**


**Other Resources (Not required)**


**Course Requirements**
The requirements of the course include a number of activities, as described below.

**Participation in Class (10% of grade)**
Students are expected to share their perspectives on the required readings and to participate in class discussions and assignments.

**Policy/program analysis paper (30% of grade)**
Each student must prepare a 15-page paper analyzing a retention program or policy (national, state or campus level). The paper must include the background and introduction of the issue, origin of the program or policy, theory to support the program/policy and implications for practice. The paper should address whether the policy or program supports the theory, why or why not? How is the program or policy working? Who are the stakeholders? What has been the outcome of the program/policy? Depending on the topic, the format and design of the paper could vary. **This paper will be due on October 25th, 2016.**

**Intervention Model (50% of grade)**
Students will be responsible for developing an intervention model/position paper reflecting their perspective on the factors that make a difference in retention. Working with your team, the paper will be designed to address retention overall or retention of a particular population. The paper must be supported by the literature and must include a retention intervention designed by the team. A number of resources are required for this project. Students must reflect the current literature to support their position. Teams must conduct a set of at least six information interviews with students, administrators and/or faculty to support the
development of their model. Where appropriate, teams can define the parameters for their retention model (e.g., designed for large institution, small, private, historically black, predominately white, women's college). Outlines for this paper must be approved in advance. Please submit outlines on or before **October 25, 2016**. Final papers will be due Monday **December 12, 2016**. Please e-mail your final paper to Dr. Fries-Britt at sfries@umd.edu.

**Group Presentations (10% of grade)**
At the end of the semester each team will be responsible for presenting to the class their suggested group intervention model. What is important is that you bring your best thoughts about what you have found in your individual work to inform what the group presents to the class. Your group effort should result in an executive summary (not to exceed 5 pages) describing the intervention and supporting evidence from the literature. This executive summary should be given to members of the class during your presentation.

The group assignments will be made based on the topics identified below. Each student will be asked to rank order their selection. Every effort will be made to match as close as possible one of your top two selections.

- General retention
- Underrepresented/minority students
- Specific minority group (Black, Latino, Asian, LGBT, etc.)
- First generation/non traditional students
- Retention of graduate students
- Retention of students in STEM

You will be responsible for evaluating your team members. More details for this assignment will be provided in class.

**Course Evaluation**
Your participation in the evaluation of courses through CourseEvalUM is a responsibility you hold as a student member of our academic community. Your feedback is confidential and important to the improvement of teaching and learning at the University as well as to the tenure and promotion process.

You can go directly to the website [www.courseevalum.umd.edu](http://www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete your evaluations these are typically available around **November 27** through **December 11**. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing the summary reports for thousands of courses online at Testudo.

**Class Schedule**

**August 30**
**Introduction and Overview**
Class introductions, review reading assignments, grading method and discuss the purpose and focus of the course. Begin discussing group projects and assignments.

**September 6**
**Understanding Student Departure**
Readings: Tinto (1993) Chapters 1-4; Tinto (2012) Appendix A

September 13

Theories of Retention
Readings: Tierney (1992); Astin (1993) (Chapter 1); Tinto, 1998;

September 20

Theories of Retention Continued & Revising Tinto’s Theory
Note: All group selections must be turned in by this time!

September 27

Other Related Frameworks
Readings: Bean (1980); Pascarella (1980); Padilla et al. (1997)

October 4

New Theoretical Directions
Note: Discuss the Fleming assignment for each team

October 11

Part I: Diverse Students
Readings: Fleming (2012); Merisotis & McCarthy (2005)

October 18

Part II: Diverse Students
Readings: Fleming (2012)

October 25

Policy/Program Discussion
Policy/program analysis papers are due and all students should be prepared to participate in a round table discussion to talk about what they learned.

Outlines for the final paper are due!

November 1

Implications for Research, Practice & Policy

November 8

ASHE Conference In Ohio
Retention Group Research & Meeting Time
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>November 15</td>
<td>Retention Group Research &amp; Meeting Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 22</td>
<td>No Class Thanksgiving Holiday</td>
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<td>November 29</td>
<td>Part I: Class Presentations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PLEASE GO ON-LINE TO COMPLETE CLASS EVALUATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 6</td>
<td>Part II: Class Presentations</td>
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<td>Final papers are due Monday December 12th by close of business. Please send e-copy to Dr. Fries-Britt at <a href="mailto:sfries@umd.edu">sfries@umd.edu</a> and Donté McGuire <a href="mailto:donte@umd.edu">donte@umd.edu</a></td>
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