



INTENTIONAL CONVERSATIONS LEAVE AN IMPACT

Housing & Residence Life houses approximately 5,000 freshmen students on the NAU campus, representing over 90% of the freshmen class. In addition to both full-time and graduate assistant staff, the department employs undergraduate student mentors in a variety of positions to work with freshmen students. This poster looks at the importance of one-on-one conversations between peer mentors and freshmen students to assist with their transition to the University and retention to their Sophomore year.

“A PEER MENTOR . . . understands that their interactions with students are opportunities to help others discover the potential within themselves to succeed in the university and in life.”



CSUN PROFESSOR GLENN OMATSU

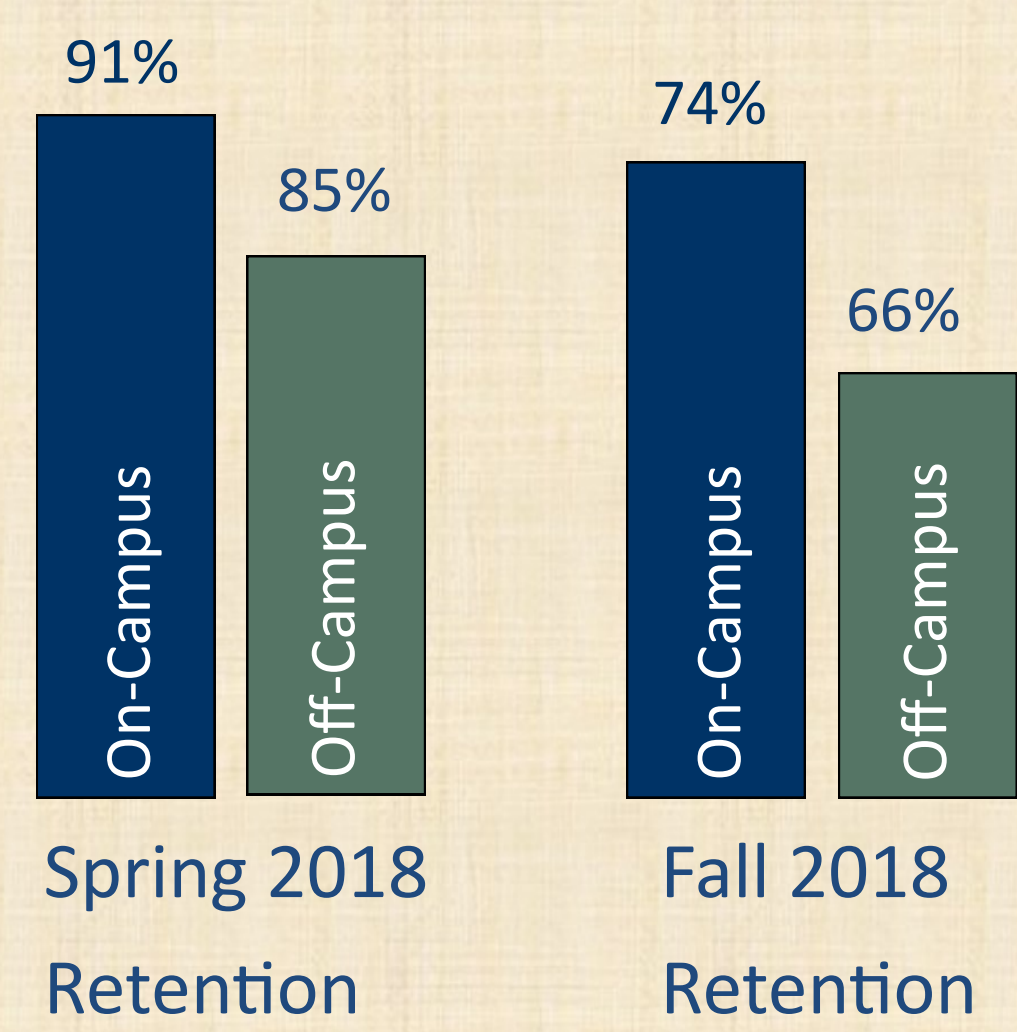
Resident Assistants

A Resident Assistant (RA) is a trained peer and role model who leads those living in a residence hall on the NAU campus and acts as a resource for residential students. They are responsible for creating vibrant communities where students get to know their neighbors and reach out to residents individually.

Community Mentor

A Community Mentor (CM) is a peer leader who assists freshmen students participating in learning communities, with their academic and social transition to the University. They help build relationships among students in their learning communities, help them explore their major and introduce them to academic resources.

A LOOK AT 2017 HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE STUDENT RETENTION



The Fall 2017 First Time, Full Time residential students were tracked for retention to the Spring 2018 semester, and Fall 2018 semester. Freshmen students who chose to live on campus were retained at higher rates than freshmen living off campus.

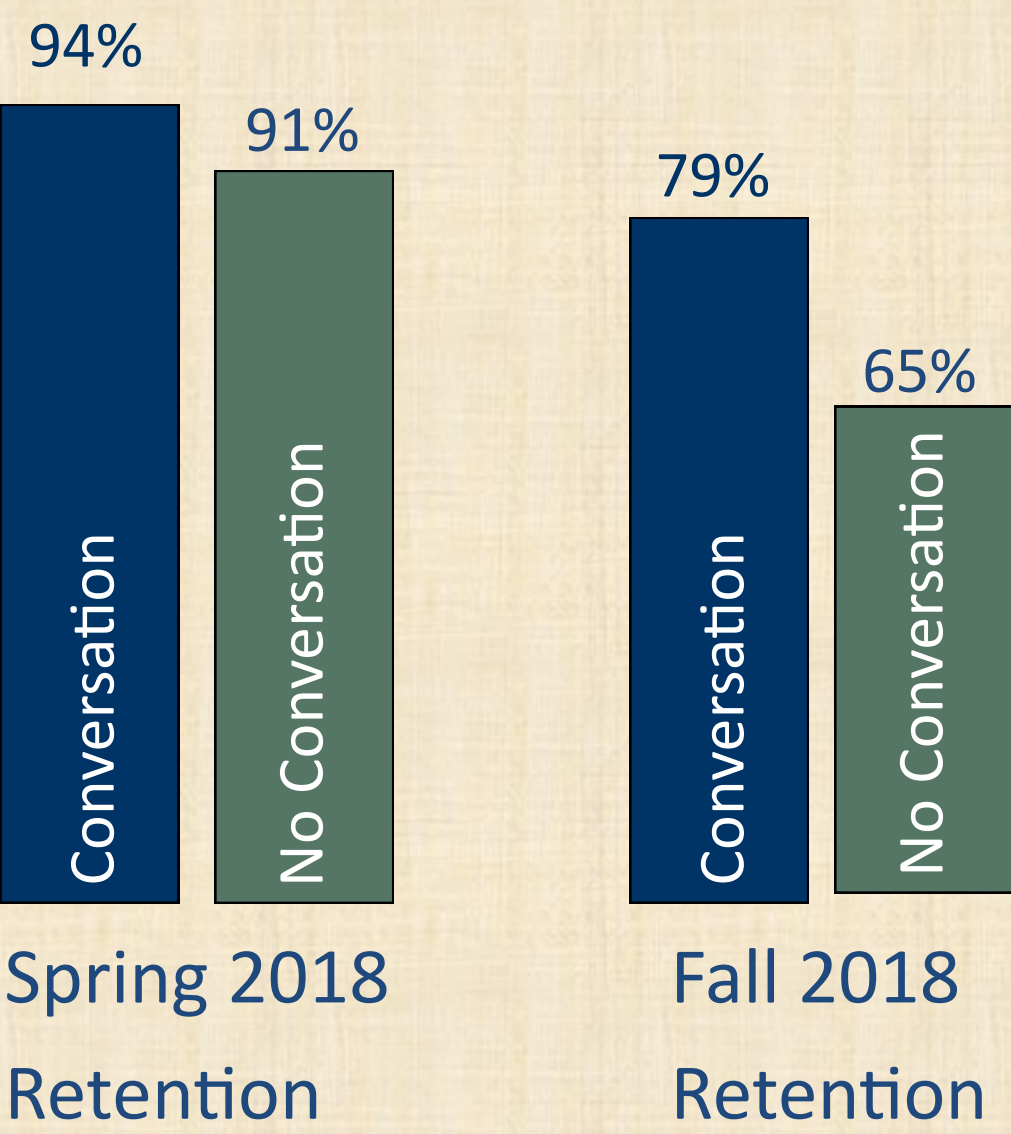
Outreach Efforts . . .



FYSI
SURVEY

During summer orientation incoming freshmen students completed the First Year Success Inventory. Students were asked to rate their “readiness” in areas such as academic effort, commitment to earning a degree, grit and campus involvement. Housing and Residence Life was assigned a group of student participants in the learning communities who had completed the survey. Community Mentor staff were asked to follow up individually with these respondents.

Intentional Conversations . . .



Of the 535 survey respondents assigned to the learning community program, Community Mentor staff had a conversation with 68% of the students. The retention of students for both the Spring 2018 and Fall 2019 semesters, who met face-to-face with a Community Mentor, was higher than those students who did not have an individual meeting.

Outreach Efforts . . .



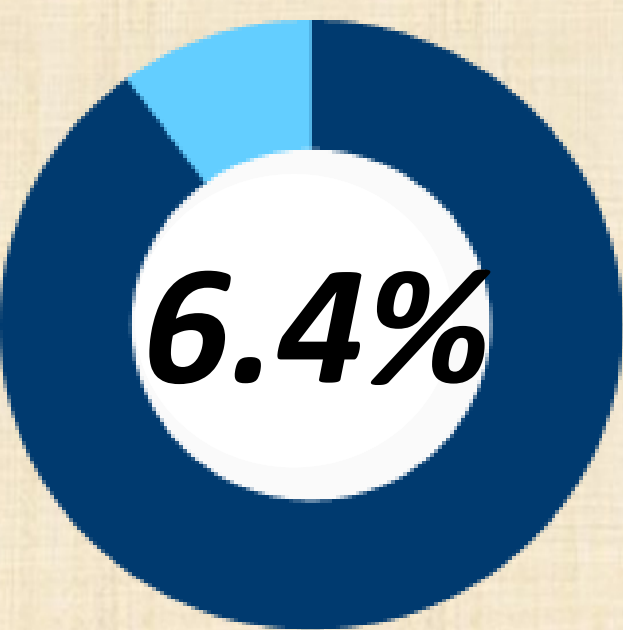
PULSE SURVEY

At the beginning of the Fall 2017 semester, 56% of residents completed a four question survey that was sent to each residential student asking about their transition to the university. Survey questions asked included:

- How they felt being at NAU
- The number of classes they had missed
- Whether they were making friends
- How things were going with their roommate(s)

Based upon their answers, Resident Assistant staff were asked to follow up individually with any survey respondent whose answer might be indicative of a less than successful transition to the University.

Intentional Conversations . . .



Of the 448 survey respondents whose answers might negatively impact their successful transition to the University, Resident Assistant staff had a conversation with **90%** of the students. The retention of students struggling with their transition was 6.4% higher for those who met with an RA, compared to those students who did not have an individual meeting.

GOALS



Recognizing the positive impact that Intentional Conversations between peer mentoring staff and students can have, increased training and resources will be allocated for peer mentor training.



Knowing that Intentional Conversations benefit students, efforts will be made to increase the face-to-face contacts with the FYSI respondents by mentors.



Knowing that Intentional Conversations benefit students, efforts will be made to increase Pulse Survey student participation and follow-up conversation tracking.