Retention Alert:
Helpful Questions and Answers

1. What is the Student Persistence and Success Plan (SPSP) and how does it use the Datatel/Ellucian Retention Alert module?

SPSP is an early alert program designed to identify at-risk factors a student is facing and help him/her overcome those obstacles in the pursuit of their academic success. Retention Alert is a Datatel/Ellucian software module that tracks the submission of the SPSP referrals and allows the SPSP Coordinators to work the case.

2. What is a SPSP Coordinator?

Following a referral, the SPSP Coordinator contacts the student to help him/her develop a plan for academic success, including providing information about campus resources. The SPSP Coordinator becomes a source of support for the at-risk student. Additionally, a SPSP Divisional Coordinator provides back-up support to the academic division-specific SPSP Coordinators.

3. How is a student assigned to a SPSP Coordinator?

When a faculty or staff member submits a case, the System Manager will route the case to the appropriate SPSP Coordinator based on the academic division of the course in which the student is at-risk. Additionally, cases can be routed to campus resources, such as the Counseling Center.

4. What is the process for a SPSP referral?

- A referral is made through WebAdvisor, either through the class roster or by searching for a student under the "Contribute Retention Info" link. The employee clicks on the student's name and scrolls to the bottom of the screen. At the bottom of the screen, a small box says "Add Retention Alert Info." The employee will click on this link, fill out the form, and click "submit."
  - o If employee needs to report more than one issue about the same student, he or she will select the box at the bottom of the form says, "Would you like to add another issue?" This will bring up a blank form for them to fill out another form for the other issue(s).

- The submitted SPSP referral goes to the System Manager who distributes the instructor referral to the appropriate SPSP Coordinator or support staff.

- The SPSP Coordinator receives a referral, communicates with the student, and implements an improvement plan, which can include making appointments for services available through campus resources such as the Learning Center.

- The referral is closed when the SPSP Coordinator feels that satisfactory progress has been made with the student or at the end of the semester.

5. Can disciplinary problems be reported through Retention Alert?

Yes, disciplinary issues are referred directly to the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs.

6. How does a faculty or staff member know when to open a case?

There are no specific guidelines for when to open a case. It can depend on teaching style. For example, if a course is front-loaded with critical information, then a student who misses those classes could be at a greater disadvantage. It is important to submit a case early, so there is time to develop a plan to get the student back on the right track.

7. What should an employee do if he or she think a student might be in danger or might be a danger to themselves or others?

First, follow the department's protocol for dealing with high-risk situations. If employees would normally enlist help from the police or a counselor, for example, they should continue to do so. Second, submit a Retention

Alert case. In these high-risk cases, it is very important to address the situation quickly and a Retention Alert case should be submitted only after you have already made the necessary initial contact.

8. How detailed should faculty members be when referring students to the program?
Please submit only detailed, factual information regarding the at-risk behavior the student exhibits. When submitting a referral, keep FERPA in mind and assume that anything written about a student becomes part of his/her educational record, which can be reviewed by the student, as well as subpoenaed by the courts. All referrals should be accurate and objective.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact:
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