

Research Briefs

KEY FINDINGS

- Students who registered on time had a higher success rate in courses than those who registered late.
- Students who registered late in a previous term and who were required to register on time in a subsequent term had higher success rates than in the term when they registered late.

IMPLICATIONS

For Practice:

- Students should be made continually aware of registration dates and deadlines.

For Policy:

- Students should not be allowed to register for classes after the class has begun.

For Research:

- Further investigation into issues that may prohibit students from registering on time should be made.



Rethinking Late Registration

A 2006 Achieving the Dream Study

While South Texas college (STC) is committed to working with students in helping them realize their academic goals, the practice of allowing students to register late was found to be a hindrance to their academic success. Examining data comparing late-registrants grades to those of students who registered in a timely manner suggested that late-registration does have an impact on the level of success that students achieve in their course work.

Background

In Fall 2004 South Texas College reviewed data regarding the numbers of students who were registering late for classes. The College was interested to know if allowing students to register late was helping or hindering the students. South Texas College has always been committed to providing an accessible and effective learning environment and in the past, had afforded students the opportunity to register for courses late. A preliminary look at the data regarding

late registrants indicated that seven of the top eleven courses for which students were registering late were developmental courses, including each of the 3 levels of developmental math that were offered. Faculty also expressed concern

that students registering late are missing vital information early in the term for all classes but particularly for Math.

In Fall 2004, 16% of late registrants were dropped due to non-payment compared to a 4% average drop for total student body. The dropped students were not included in the remaining data analyses since they did not have

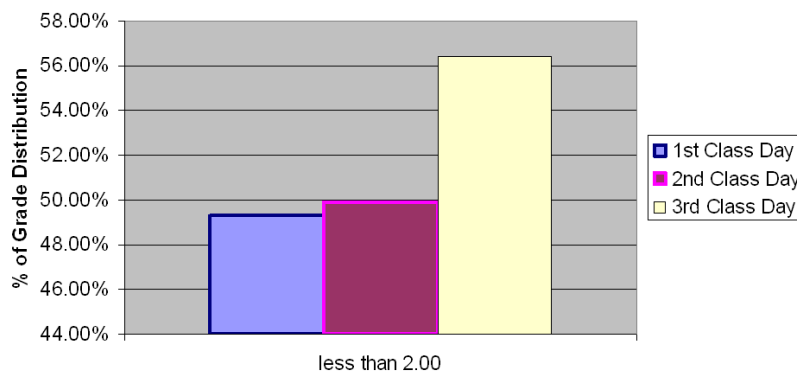
third day, 56% scored less than a 2.00 (on a 4 point scale). After much dialogue and the realization that for the College's more selective programs in Nursing and Allied Health there was no late registration allowed which did not appear to have any impact on enrollment, the College decided to change policy to no longer allow students to register for a course after the first day of class for that course. The College also provided other mini-mester sections to accommodate these students rather than turn them away. Fall

2005 was the first semester with the new policy in place.

Purpose of Study

This study examined whether or not late-registration was affecting the level of success

Difference in Success Rates by Late Registration Date



course grades.

When analyzing the Fall 2004 grades of late registrants, the researchers found that approximately 50% of them scored a 2.00 in the course if they registered less than 3 days late. On the

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achieved by students during the course of a semester in comparison to their peers who registered on time. For the purposes of this study, late registration is defined as a student registering after the first class day of any particular course section.

Methodology

Existing data regarding 800 students who registered on or after 1st class day in Fall 2004 was examined. These students made up 4.5% of total enrollment. Of the 800 late registrants, 674 (84%) of them paid for their classes and remained enrolled in the term. The other 126 (16%) were dropped for non-payment. The late registrants who stayed enrolled in the course were tracked at the end of the term and the following Fall term to see if their grades were significantly different from their peers who registered on time.

Research Questions

The research questions asked in this study were:

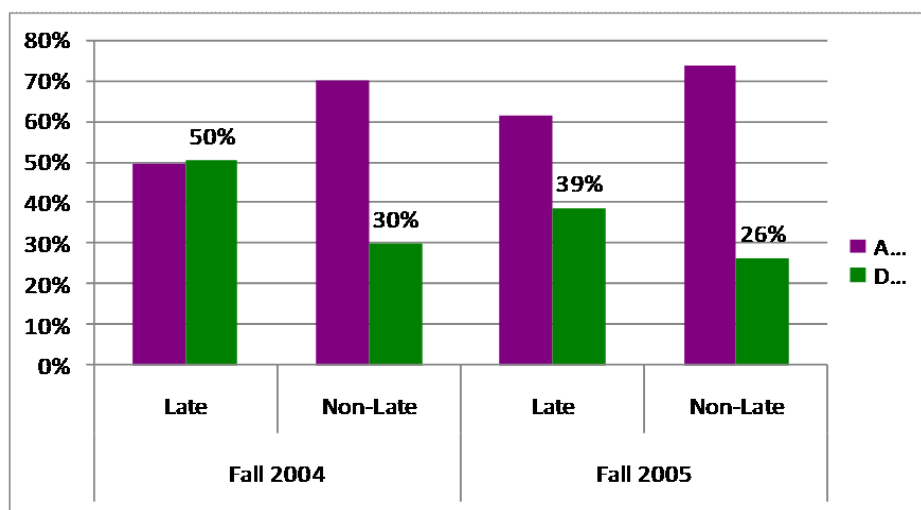
Do late registrants achieve the same grades as non-late registrants?

Do students who were late registrants in a previous term, who are required to register on time in the subsequent term achieve the same grades as non-late registrants?

policy, would result in higher grades. In order to answer this second research question, the researchers examined the grades of students from Fall 2004 who also registered for Fall 2005 and assigned them to groups based on whether or not they had registered late in the Fall 2004 term. The grade analyses indicated that whereas late regis-

trants in Fall 2004 had a 50% rate of 2.00 or higher grades, in the Fall 2005 term those same students grade distribution was much more similar to the non-late registrants in that 60% achieved a 2.00 or higher compared to the non-late regis-

trants of whom 72% achieved at that level.



Key Findings

During the Fall 2004 term, students who registered late had about a 50/50 chance (49% scored 2.00 or higher) of passing the course with a 2.00 or higher, whereas of students who registered on time, 71% scored a grade of 2.00 or higher. Additionally, 25% of students who registered late for courses received a failing grade compared to only 11% of those who registered on time.

Since the new policy was put in place for Fall 2005 and all students were required to register on time, the College investigated as to whether simply registering on time, even if it was forced by a

Implications from the Data

While not impacting every late registrant, the data do tend to confirm that the elimination of late registration is in the best interest of students and the policy should be maintained. Further examination into why students register late would also be in order to identify whether there are other informational issues (i.e., financial aid, college information in general, academic calendar information) issues that might be addressed in a different way to assist potential students.