



**Northern Illinois
University**

Student Absence Notification

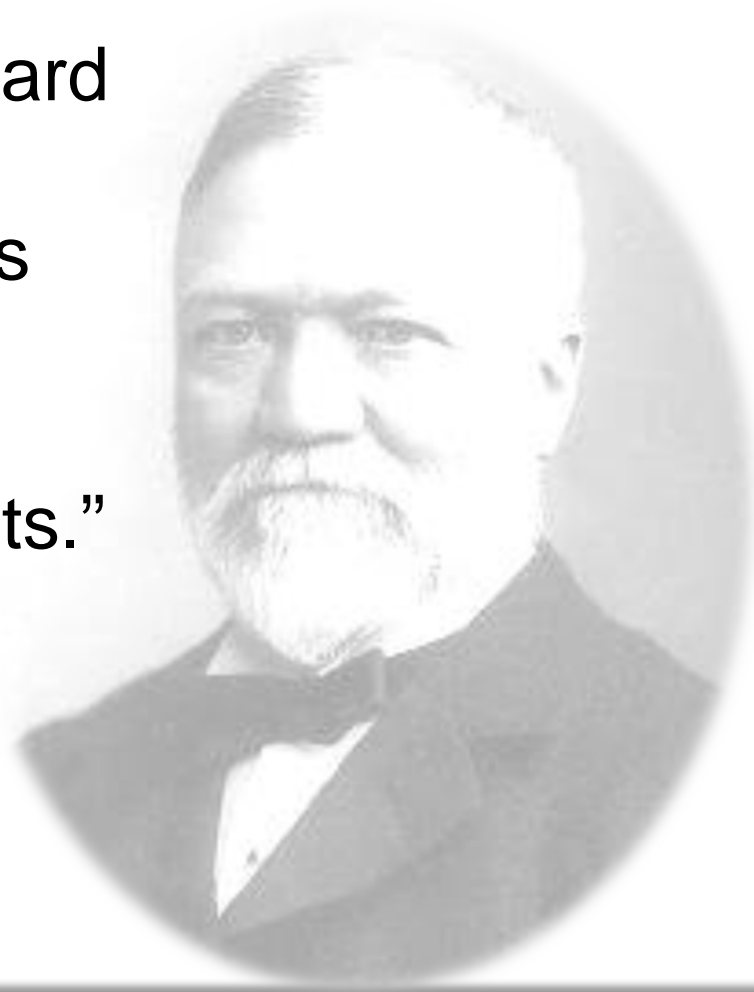
October 22, 2014

“Teamwork is...



...the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.”

- *Andrew Carnegie* -



Objective



This pilot program focused on a specific retention strategy in the initial weeks of the semester, utilizing a centralized, systematic process:

- Centralize fragmented efforts
- Create a software system
- Develop a process
- Designate a contact
- Follow up

What we know now:



- Number of sections that participated: 329
- Number of students missing more than one class: 1154
- Number of students missing only one class: 1789
- Total missed class(es): 2943

Reflects data collected as of 9/20/14

What we know now:



<u>Reason for missing class</u>	<u># of students</u>
Did not know enrolled	9
Not attending NIU	24
Just added the class	32
Student was lost	35
Thought class was dropped	91
Other	158
Student reported in class	167
Personal reasons	581
Unable to reach student	825

For example:



“One student missed a few classes, having to return home for a family emergency. When I called, she told me she was sitting in the airport waiting for a flight and appreciated the fact we noticed she was absent and called to find out if she was okay.”

“A new transfer student indicated that he was very overwhelmed by the size of NIU, missing some first-week classes due to difficulties with parking and navigating to campus locations. The student was very thankful to receive my call and said it was nice to know someone cared.”



For example:



“A senior student was reported as having missed all of his classes within the first week of the semester. Upon calling, I learned that his father had unexpectedly passed away so the student left campus quickly to be with his family. I was able to lessen his stress by contacting Student Affairs who then reached out to the student's instructors. While it was one small action on the part of the university, the student was grateful to have one less thing to worry about.”



“A student I contacted through the class attendance pilot program said he felt he lacked the academic skills necessary to be successful this semester. After listening to him describe his challenges, we discussed time management and organization strategies and created an action plan for him. We’ll meet periodically during the semester to gauge his progress.”

What we hope to learn:



- Did our early intervention help retain students?
- Did the student contact communicate care and concern to our students?
- Was the project positively received and/or perceived by students receiving a contact?
- What can we learn from other institutions who have successfully implemented similar initiatives?
- Is there value in continuing this initiative and if so, at what scope?