



## **Fall 2008 Cohort Non-returning Students: What do we know?**

### **Executive Summary**

The following report provides an analysis of 497 first-time full-time degree seeking freshmen in the University of South Alabama (USA) Fall 2008 cohort who did not return to USA in Fall 2009. Of these non-returning students, 173 transferred prior to Fall 2009 and 324 “stopped out” or did not enroll in another college or university.

- Results indicate a large majority of transfer students transferred to an institution with one or more of the following characteristics: public, two year institution, or located in Alabama.
- Findings showed large percentage based differences between students who “stopped out” with less than six USA earned hours (29%) or students with a USA GPA of 2.0 or below (26%) and students who transferred and had a similar number of earned hours or similar USA GPA.
- Early alert signals for students at greater risk to “stop out” altogether instead of transferring included local origin (23%), attendance at the adult or August orientation sessions (12%), living off campus (11%), high school GPA of 2.5 or below (10%), and male gender (10%).
- 58% of non-returning students who “stopped out” attended the adult, August, or fifth freshman new student orientation sessions. Students attending one of these orientation sessions should be targeted early with interventions to help them persist and return.

### **Overview**

The following report provides an analysis of 497 first-time full-time degree seeking freshmen in the University of South Alabama (USA) Fall 2008 cohort who did

not return to USA in Fall 2009. The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) was used to identify whether non-returning students transferred to another institution or “stopped out” altogether and did not enroll in another higher education institution in Fall 2009. While the preference is for students to return and persist at USA, a student who transferred to another institution could be considered a secondary measure of student success. With the NSC receiving data from over 3,200 (91%) of all colleges and universities in the United States, students who were not identified as transfer students by the NSC are unlikely to be enrolled at another college or university and have “stopped out” of higher education. This report provides comparisons between 173 non-returning students who transferred to another institution prior to Fall 2009 and 324 non-returning students who “stopped out” and did not enroll at another college or university.

### **Profile of Non-returning Student Who “Stopped Out”**

- No other scholarship<sup>1</sup> (84%)
- No freshman scholarship<sup>2</sup> (75%)
- From Mobile or Baldwin County (74%)
- USA GPA of 2.0 or below (74%)
- 18 years old (69%)
- White (65%)
- Lived off-campus (62%)
- Male (56%)
- Earned zero to six USA credit hours (55%)
- High school GPA between 2.51-3.0 (34%)
- Composite ACT score of 19 or 20 (29%)
- Attended the adult, August, or fifth freshman new student orientation session (29%)

### **Profile of Non-returning Student Who Transferred**

- No other scholarship (87%)

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<sup>1</sup> Military/ROTC, vocational rehab, employment funded, prepaid AL, MS, or FL tuition, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Bay Area, Honors, Mitchell, Presidential, or Starnes merit based scholarships

- 18 years old (84%)
- No freshman scholarship (72%)
- White (67%)
- Female (54%)
- From Mobile or Baldwin County (51%)
- Lived off-campus (51%)
- USA GPA of 2.0 or below (48%)
- Earned 12.5-18 USA credit hours (33%)
- High school GPA between 3.01-3.5 (33%)
- Composite ACT score of 19 or 20 (26%)
- Attended the fifth freshman new student orientation session (20%)

**Where Non-returning Students Transferred**

Of the 173 non-returning students who transferred, a large majority transferred to an institution with one or more of three characteristics. The institution was likely: 1) public (89%), 2) two year institution (71%), and/or 3) located in Alabama (62%). Mississippi (16%) was also a likely transfer destination (see Table 1: Types of Institutions Where USA Students Transferred and Table 2: Top 5 States Where USA Students Transferred).

**Table 1: Types of Institutions Where USA Students Transferred**

2 or 4 Year Institution	Count	%	Public or Private Institution	Count	%
2 Year Institution	123	71%	Public Institution	154	89%
4 Year Institution	50	29%	Private Institution	19	11%

**Table 2: Top 5 States Where USA Students Transferred**

Rank	State	Count	%
1	Alabama	108	62%
2	Mississippi	28	16%
3	Florida	11	6%
4	Iowa	3	2%
4	North Carolina	3	2%

The most common two year institutions of choice were Faulkner State (40), Bishop State (23), and Mississippi Gulf Coast (22). Of the four year universities, Auburn (5) and Alabama (5) were the most common transfer destination (see Table 3: Top 10 Institutions Where USA Students Transferred tables).

**Table 3: Top 10 Institutions Where USA Students Transferred**

Rank	College	Count	%
1	FAULKNER STATE COLLEGE	40	23%
2	BISHOP STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	23	13%
3	MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE	22	13%
4	AUBURN UNIVERSITY	5	3%
4	UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA	5	3%
4	SOUTHERN UNION STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	5	3%
7	PENSACOLA JUNIOR COLLEGE	4	2%
7	WALLACE STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	4	2%
9	JEFFERSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE	3	2%
9	NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE	3	2%

### **Comparison of Non-returning Transfer Students to Students Who “Stopped Out”**

Multiple characteristics of non-returning students were compared to determine what characteristics showed large percentage based differences between the 324 non-returning students who “stopped out” compared to the 173 non-returning students who transferred. The following table displays characteristics with percentage based differences of 10% or greater between students who transferred and students who “stopped out” (complete data tables are found in the Appendix). The number of USA earned hours and USA GPA were the two characteristics with subgroups that showed the greatest difference between non-returning students who “stopped out” and students who transferred (see Table 4: Key Characteristics of Fall 2008 Cohort Non-Returners).

- 55% of non-returning students who “stopped out” completed zero to six USA credit hours (178) compared to 26% of non-returning students who transferred (45).

- 74% of the non-returning students who “stopped out” had a USA GPA of 2.0 or below (214) compared to 48% of non-returning students who transferred (79).

**Table 4: Key Characteristics of Fall 2008 Cohort Non-Returners**

Top within Group Characteristics	Transferred (n=173)	% Transferred	Stopped Out (n=324)	% Stopped Out	% Difference Between Transferred & Stopped Out
<i># USA Earned Hours</i>					
0-6 hours	45	26%	178	55%	-29%
12.5-18 hours	57	33%	47	15%	+18%
<i>USA GPA (Note: n=290 Stopped Out; 165 Transferred)</i>					
2.0 or below	79	48%	214	74%	-26%
2.51-3.0	28	17%	18	6%	+11%
<i>Region</i>					
Mobile or Baldwin County	89	51%	239	74%	-23%
Mississippi Service Area	25	15%	14	4%	+11%
<i>Orientation Session</i>					
Adult/August Orientation	29	17%	95	29%	-12%
<i>Housing</i>					
Off-Campus	89	51%	202	62%	-11%
<i>Gender</i>					
Male	80	46%	182	56%	-10%
<i>HS GPA (Note: n=255 Stopped Out; 147 Transferred)</i>					
2.5 or below	14	10%	51	20%	-10%
3.51-4.0	41	28%	41	16%	+12%
<i>Age</i>					
18 years old	145	84%	222	69%	+15%
Note: Cells are shaded in yellow where % transferred compared to % stopped out was positive and greater or equal to 10% while cells are shaded in red where % transferred compared to % stopped out was negative and greater than or equal to 10%.					

Results showed that the region from where the student originated had the third greatest percentage based differential between non-returning students who “stopped out” and non-returning students who transferred. Students from Mobile or Baldwin County

were far more likely to “stop out” while students from other regions, particularly the Mississippi service area, were more likely to transfer than students from the same region.

- 74% of non-returning students who “stopped out” came from Mobile or Baldwin County (239) compared to 51% of non-returning students who transferred (89).
- 15% of non-returning students who transferred came from the Mississippi service area (25) compared to 4% of non-returning students who “stopped out” (14).

Five other comparison groups showed percentage based differentials greater than or equal to 10% between students who “stopped out” and students who transferred. These other five comparison groups were: 1) orientation session, 2) housing, 3) gender, 4) high school GPA (included two sub groups), and 5) age.

- 29% of non-returning students who “stopped out” attended the adult or August new student orientation session (95) compared to 17% of non-returning students who transferred (29).
- 62% of non-returning students who “stopped out” lived off-campus (202) compared to 51% of non-returning students who transferred (89).
- 56% of non-returning students who “stopped out” were male (182) while 46% of non-returning students who transferred were male (80).
- 20% of non-returning students who “stopped out” had a high school GPA of 2.5 or below (51) compared to 10% of non-returning students who transferred (14). In addition, 28% of non-returning students who transferred had a high school GPA of 3.51 or higher (41) compared to 16% of non-returning students who “stopped out” (41).
- 84% of non-returning students who transferred were 18 years old (145) compared to 69% of non-returning students who “stopped out” (222).

### **Implications**

- Findings indicated a large percentage based difference between students who “stopped out” with less than six USA earned hours (29%) or students with a USA GPA of 2.0 or below (26%) compared to students who transferred. These students may have benefited from intrusive advising to improve their odds of

persistence at USA or to prepare them to transfer elsewhere. While the preference is to encourage USA freshmen students to continue and persist at USA, a student who successfully transfers to another institution could also be considered a secondary measure of success compared to a complete “stop out” from higher education.

- Early alert signals for students at greater risk to “stop out” altogether instead of transferring elsewhere included local students (23%), attendance at the adult or August orientation sessions (12%), students living off campus (11%), high school GPA of 2.5 or below (10%), and male students (10%). Students with those characteristics are unlikely to transfer to another institution.
- 58% of non-returning students who “stopped out” attended the adult, August, or fifth freshman new student orientation sessions. Students attending one of these orientation sessions should be targeted early with interventions to help them persist and return.

## APPENDIX



## Crosstabs of Fall 2008 Freshman Cohort Non-returning Students

USA GPA \* Transferred from USA Cross tabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
USA GPA	2.0 or below	Count	214	79	293
		% within Transferred from USA	73.8%	47.9%	64.4%
	2.01-2.5	Count	41	29	70
		% within Transferred from USA	14.1%	17.6%	15.4%
	2.51-3.0	Count	18	28	46
		% within Transferred from USA	6.2%	17.0%	10.1%
	3.01-3.5	Count	10	16	26
		% within Transferred from USA	3.4%	9.7%	5.7%
	3.51-4.0	Count	7	13	20
		% within Transferred from USA	2.4%	7.9%	4.4%
Total		Count	290	165	455
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Region \* Transferred from USA Cross tabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Region	Mobile or Baldwin County	Count	239	89	328
		% within Transferred from USA	73.8%	51.4%	66.0%
	Rest of Alabama	Count	44	37	81
		% within Transferred from USA	13.6%	21.4%	16.3%
	Mississippi Service Area	Count	14	25	39
		% within Transferred from USA	4.3%	14.5%	7.8%
	Florida Service Area	Count	7	4	11
		% within Transferred from USA	2.2%	2.3%	2.2%
	Rest of United States	Count	16	17	33
		% within Transferred from USA	4.9%	9.8%	6.6%
	International	Count	4	1	5
		% within Transferred from USA	1.2%	.6%	1.0%
Total		Count	324	173	497
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

USA Hours Earned \* Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
USA Hours Earned	0-6 hours	Count	178	45	223
		% within Transferred from USA	54.9%	26.0%	44.9%
	6.5-12 hours	Count	90	56	146
		% within Transferred from USA	27.8%	32.4%	29.4%
	12.5-18 hours	Count	47	57	104
		% within Transferred from USA	14.5%	32.9%	20.9%
	18.5-24 hours	Count	4	8	12
		% within Transferred from USA	1.2%	4.6%	2.4%
	24.5-30	Count	2	3	5
		% within Transferred from USA	.6%	1.7%	1.0%
	30.5 or more hours	Count	3	4	7
		% within Transferred from USA	.9%	2.3%	1.4%
Total		Count	324	173	497
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Housing \* Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Housing	No	Count	202	89	291
		% within Transferred from USA	62.3%	51.4%	58.6%
	Yes	Count	122	84	206
		% within Transferred from USA	37.7%	48.6%	41.4%
Total		Count	324	173	497
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

HS GPA \* Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
HS GPA	2.5 or below	Count	51	14	65
		% within Transferred from USA	20.0%	9.5%	16.2%
	2.51-3.0	Count	86	44	130
		% within Transferred from USA	33.7%	29.9%	32.3%
	3.01-3.5	Count	77	48	125
		% within Transferred from USA	30.2%	32.7%	31.1%
	3.51-4.0	Count	41	41	82
		% within Transferred from USA	16.1%	27.9%	20.4%
Total		Count	255	147	402
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Age \* Transferred from USA Cross tabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Age	18 years old	Count	222	145	367
		% within Transferred from USA	68.5%	83.8%	73.8%
	17 years old	Count	23	11	34
		% within Transferred from USA	7.1%	6.4%	6.8%
	19 years old	Count	46	10	56
		% within Transferred from USA	14.2%	5.8%	11.3%
	20 years or older	Count	33	7	40
		% within Transferred from USA	10.2%	4.0%	8.0%
Total	Count		324	173	497
	% within Transferred from USA		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Orientation \* Transferred from USA Cross tabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Orientation	Adult/August Orientation	Count	95	29	124
		% within Transferred from USA	29.3%	16.8%	24.9%
	May Orientation	Count	3	5	8
		% within Transferred from USA	.9%	2.9%	1.6%
	Freshman Session 1	Count	22	26	48
		% within Transferred from USA	6.8%	15.0%	9.7%
	Freshman Session 2	Count	31	25	56
		% within Transferred from USA	9.6%	14.5%	11.3%
	Freshman Session 3	Count	40	28	68
		% within Transferred from USA	12.3%	16.2%	13.7%
	Freshman Session 4	Count	39	25	64
		% within Transferred from USA	12.0%	14.5%	12.9%
	Freshman Session 5	Count	94	35	129
		% within Transferred from USA	29.0%	20.2%	26.0%
Total	Count		324	173	497
	% within Transferred from USA		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Composite ACT Score \* Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Composite ACT Score	18 or below	Count	70	36	106
		% within Transferred from USA	23.7%	22.0%	23.1%
	19-20	Count	84	42	126
		% within Transferred from USA	28.5%	25.6%	27.5%
	21-23	Count	83	38	121
		% within Transferred from USA	28.1%	23.2%	26.4%
	24-26	Count	31	30	61
		% within Transferred from USA	10.5%	18.3%	13.3%
	27-29	Count	22	11	33
		% within Transferred from USA	7.5%	6.7%	7.2%
	30 or above	Count	5	7	12
		% within Transferred from USA	1.7%	4.3%	2.6%
Total		Count	295	164	459
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

College \* Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
College	AS	Count	137	73	210
		% within Transferred from USA	42.3%	42.2%	42.3%
	AH	Count	34	29	63
		% within Transferred from USA	10.5%	16.8%	12.7%
	BU	Count	34	19	53
		% within Transferred from USA	10.5%	11.0%	10.7%
	CS	Count	18	1	19
		% within Transferred from USA	5.6%	.6%	3.8%
	ED	Count	22	10	32
		% within Transferred from USA	6.8%	5.8%	6.4%
	EG	Count	35	15	50
		% within Transferred from USA	10.8%	8.7%	10.1%
	NU	Count	43	23	66
		% within Transferred from USA	13.3%	13.3%	13.3%
	CE	Count	1	3	4
		% within Transferred from USA	.3%	1.7%	.8%
Total		Count	324	173	497
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Freshman Scholarship \* Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Freshman Scholarship	No	Count	244	125	369
		% within Transferred from USA	75.3%	72.3%	74.2%
	Yes	Count	80	48	128
		% within Transferred from USA	24.7%	27.7%	25.8%
Total		Count	324	173	497
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Other Scholarship \* Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Other Scholarship	No	Count	271	151	422
		% within Transferred from USA	83.6%	87.3%	84.9%
	Yes	Count	53	22	75
		% within Transferred from USA	16.4%	12.7%	15.1%
Total		Count	324	173	497
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Race/Ethnicity \* Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Race/Ethnicity	White	Count	210	115	325
		% within Transferred from USA	64.8%	66.5%	65.4%
	African-American	Count	70	39	109
		% within Transferred from USA	21.6%	22.5%	21.9%
	Asian	Count	8	7	15
		% within Transferred from USA	2.5%	4.0%	3.0%
	Hispanic	Count	9	5	14
		% within Transferred from USA	2.8%	2.9%	2.8%
	Non-Resident Alien	Count	4	1	5
		% within Transferred from USA	1.2%	.6%	1.0%
	Other	Count	23	6	29
		% within Transferred from USA	7.1%	3.5%	5.8%
Total		Count	324	173	497
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Gender \* Transferred from USA Crosstabulation

			Transferred from USA		Total
			Stopped Out	Transferred	
Gender	Female	Count	142	93	235
		% within Transferred from USA	43.8%	53.8%	47.3%
	Male	Count	182	80	262
		% within Transferred from USA	56.2%	46.2%	52.7%
Total		Count	324	173	497
		% within Transferred from USA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%