

# Evaluation of the Student Success Innovation Lab Completion Grant Pilot

Client: University of North Carolina

## Overview

The Student Success Innovation Lab at the University of North Carolina (UNC) awards completion grants to educational institutions throughout the state. These grants are small, just-in-time financial awards that fill financial gaps in tuition and fees for students nearing graduation. This year, the lab selected four institutions to implement a pilot program designed specifically with the goal of improving student retention and graduation rates. Selected institutions included Fayetteville State University, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Western Carolina University, and Winston-Salem State University.

The pilot provides one-time payments of \$1,500 to randomly selected eligible students at these four participating institutions. Students who receive these payments must select and participate in two career-building activities. Choices of career-building activities

include completing a financial literacy module, developing a degree completion plan and having it approved by an advisor, meeting with a career advisor to review and approve a resume, attending a workshop or career fair at the University Career Center, and performing a mock interview.

Insight is conducting a rigorous evaluation of the UNC pilot program to assess its implementation and impacts. The evaluation is designed to generate causal estimates of the impact of the pilot program and assess its cost-effectiveness. Specifically, the Insight team—

- Obtained consent from eligible students
- Conducted random assignment of students and tests for baseline equivalence
- Administered a survey of study participants
- Conducted site visits to participating institutions to assess pilot implementation and collect data on costs of pilot implementation
- Analyzed extant administrative data and student survey data to determine the impact of the pilot on students

Our final report presents an assessment of the pilot's implementation, impact, and cost-effectiveness across these universities.

## Products

Interim and final reports

