



Improving the First Year of College: Research and Practice

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The first year of college represents an enormous milestone in students' lives. Whether attending a four-year or two-year institution of higher education, living on campus or at home, or enrolled in a highly selective school or a college with an open-admissions policy, students are challenged in unique and demanding ways during their first year.

Although many students rise to the challenges they face, for some the demands are too great. Retention rates beyond the first year are disappointing: one third of first-year students seriously consider leaving college during their first term, and ultimately one half of all students who start college complete it.

What are the factors that impact students during their first year? How can the academic and social experiences of first-year students be optimized? What can we do to improve retention rates to maximize the number of students who complete college? *Improving the First Year of College* employs a variety of perspectives from leading researchers and student-service providers to address these questions and examine the first year of college.

This volume also highlights the development of learning communities and coaching, as well as how technology impacts students' first year. Perhaps most important, the book provides examples of "best practices," as determined through research by leaders in the field, to permit educators to draw on their experiences.



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