



# **Beyond First-Year Advising: New Strategies in Retention at St. Edward's University**

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**ST. EDWARD'S**  
UNIVERSITY

**Take on your world.®**

# St. Edward's University

- Catholic university chartered in 1885
- 4,600 students
- Hispanic and Minority Serving Institution
- Significant number of international students
- CAMP participation during past 40+ years
- Mission: “we meet students where they are”
- Strong emphasis on teaching and mentoring

# School of Humanities (15-16 Fact Book)

- # Majors/Programs: 12
- 807 Students (majors)
- Approx. ½ of the gen ed requirement
- No grad programs currently
- Largest major: Communication (283 students)
- Average section size overall: 16.4
- Tenure-track faculty: 59
- Full-time non-tenure-track: 9

# Desired Outcomes for New Advising Model

- Enhanced retention
- Progress toward graduation
- Post-graduation success: Jobs, fellowships, graduate school
- Improved scheduling (efficient use of resources)

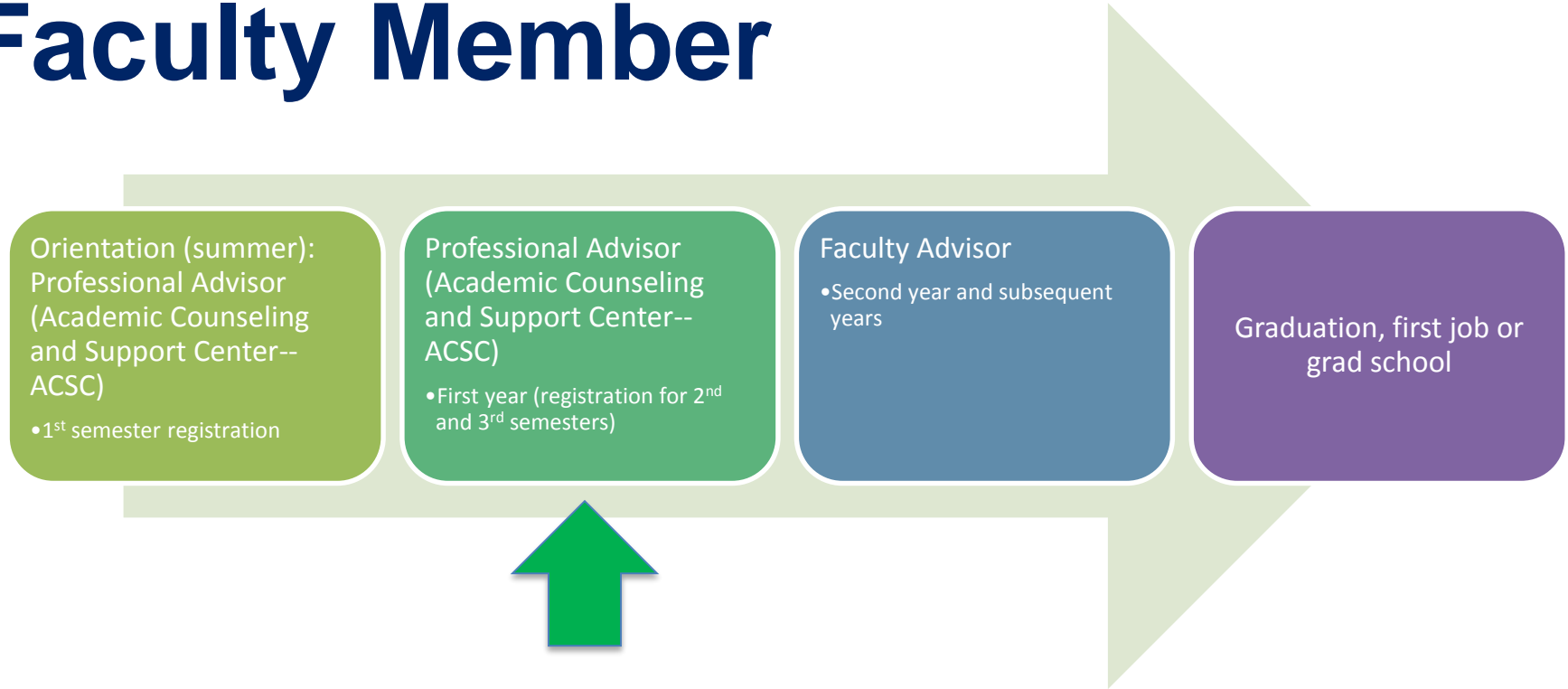
# Tradition: A “hand-off” model

- First year students advised by professional Academic Counselors in a central university office (not in the school)
  - Orientation: signed up for first semester with help of Academic Counselor; support provided for degree plan and course sequencing
  - During the first year: Academic Counselors meet regularly with advisees
    - Second semester registration
    - Referral to other offices for support (Student Counseling, etc.)
  - Academic Counselors interact with other student support services, school staff, but limited contact with faculty.

# “Handed off” to Faculty Advisors

- Beginning with 2<sup>nd</sup> year, students have traditionally been advised in the schools by faculty advisors only.
- Theoretically, faculty are required to advise 20 advisees as part of teaching responsibility.
- In Humanities, approximately 50 students are advised by (HUMX) staff advisors (this # was more in the past).
  - HUMX staff advisors also train faculty (new faculty, seasoned faculty with new advising tools and initiatives).
- Faculty who teach in small majors and minors-only programs also serve as advisors to students in large majors.

# Hand-Off Model: from ACSC to Faculty Member

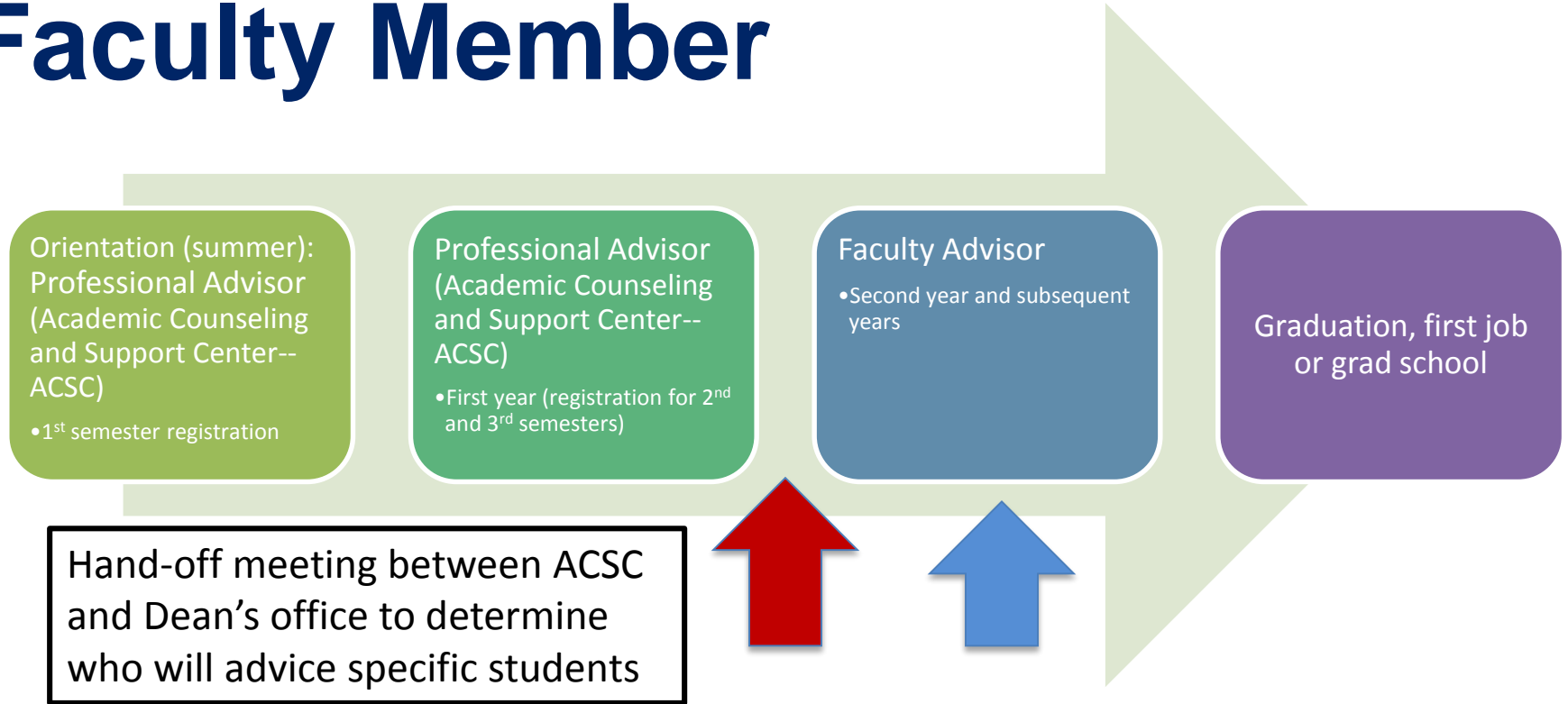


Behind the  
Scenes, the AVP  
for Academic  
Services

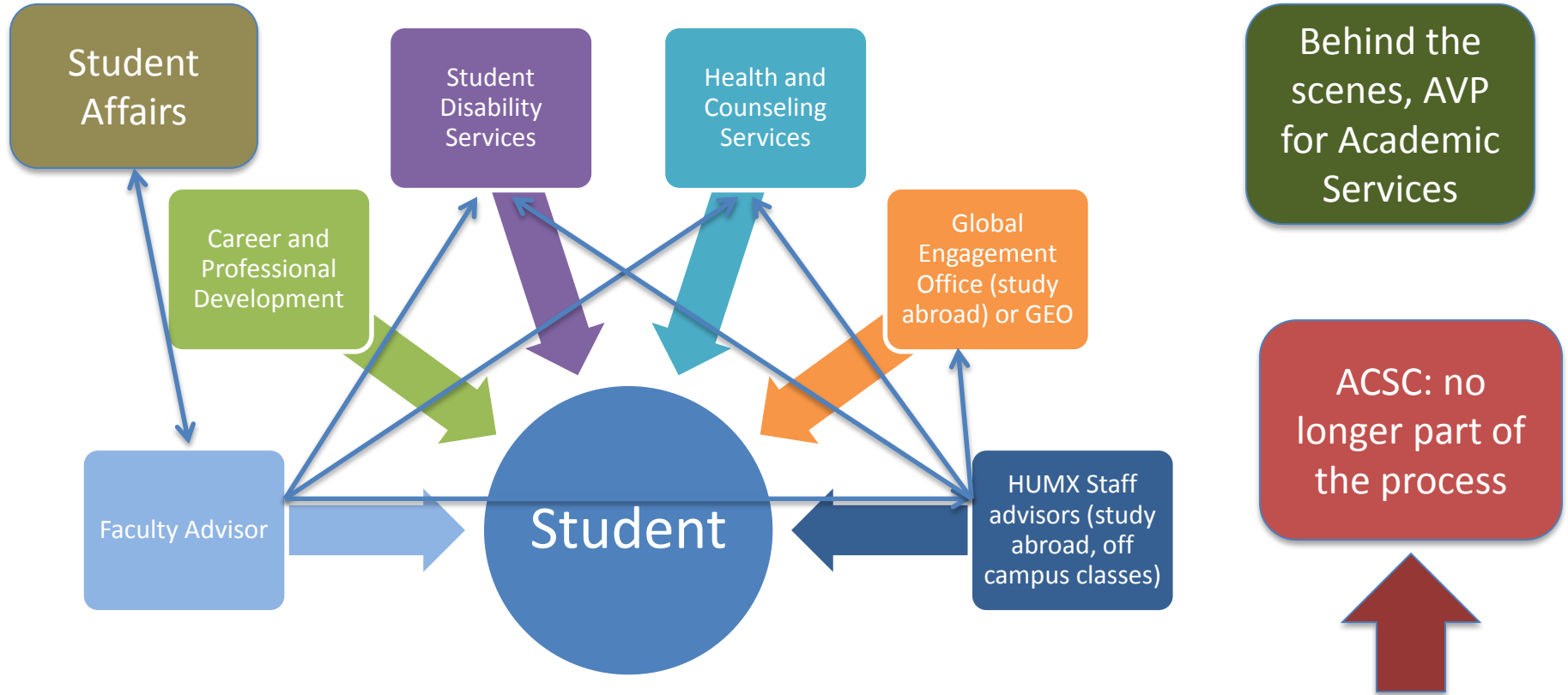




# Hand-Off Model: from ACSC to Faculty Member



# Year 2 & Beyond (traditionally)



# Reporting Structure: Issues

<b>AVP for Academic Services</b>	<b>Student Affairs</b>	<b>AVP for Global Initiatives</b>	<b>Humanities Dean</b>
ACSC	Health and Counseling	Global Education Office	Humanities Staff Advisors
Student Disability Services			Faculty
Career and Professional Development			

Lack of integration / lack of accountability

# Developing a Pilot

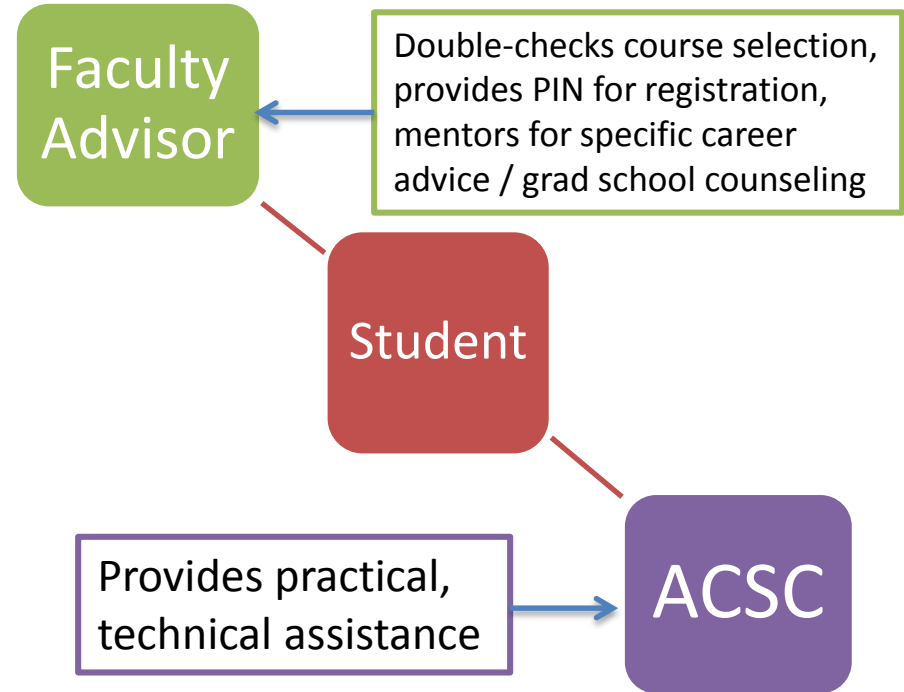
- A committee with reps from all schools, Career, GEO, ACE, Staff advisors. Members of my staff and I served on this committee.
- Not all Schools wanted to participate.
- Humanities and Business volunteered for the pilot.

## Central questions:

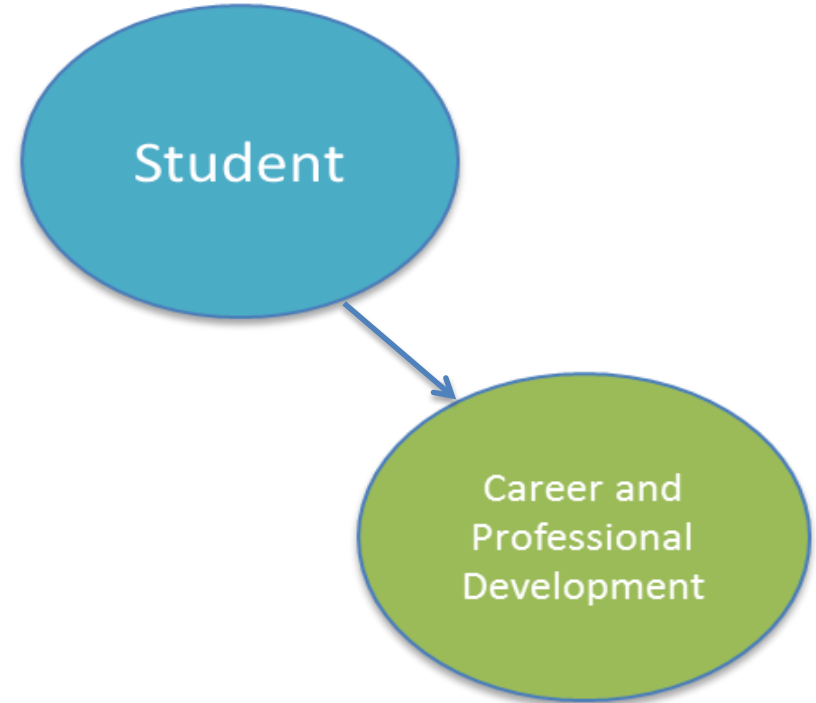
- How can we continue some of the year 1 services in years 2, 3, 4?
- How can we integrate other services better and more systematically?
- How can we improve outcomes?

# Developing a Pilot

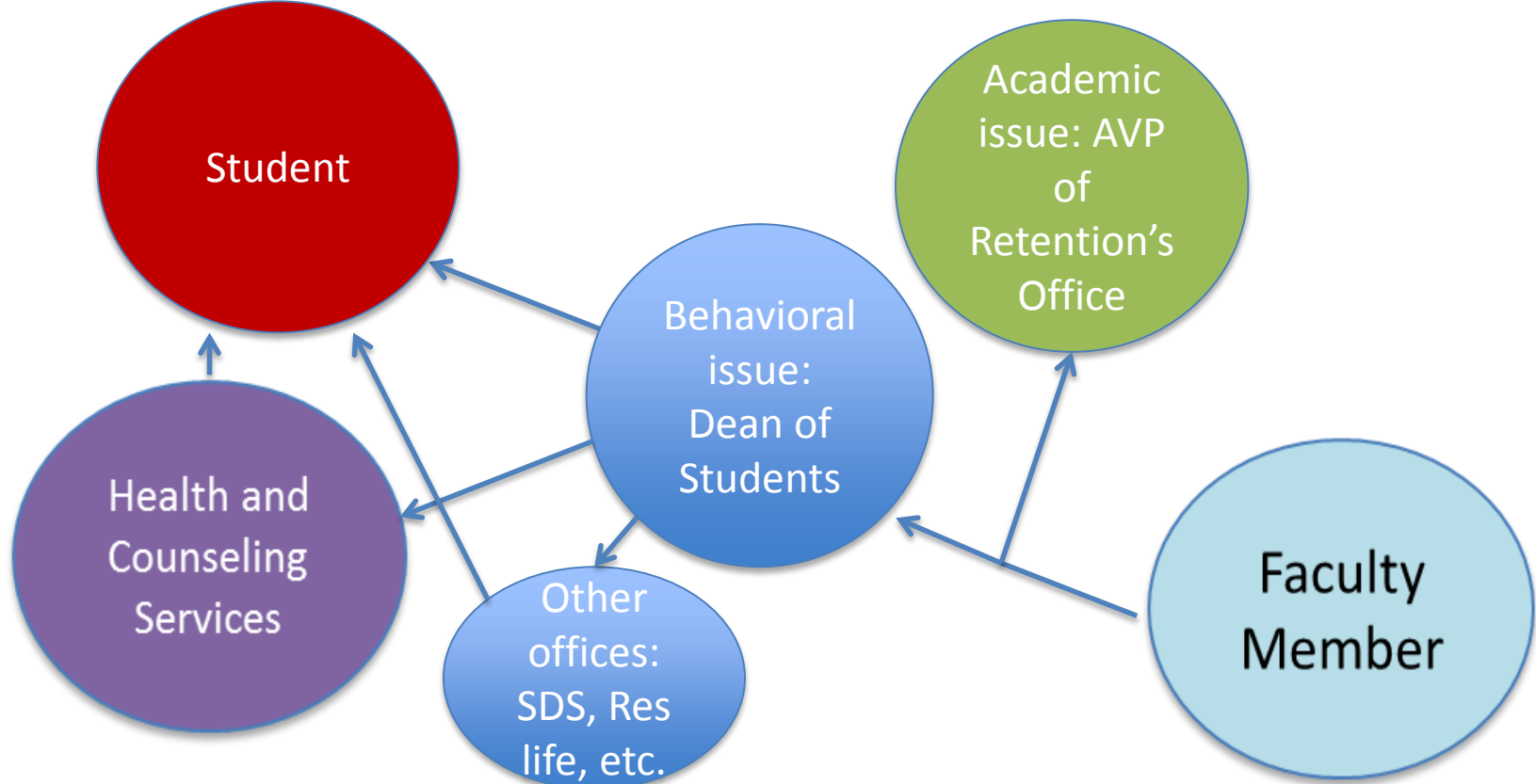
- At the beginning we asked: how can we continue relationship between student and ACSC after 1<sup>st</sup> year?
  - Many students change major at beginning of sophomore year;
  - Students don't know where to go for help;
  - Students and faculty need support with Degree Works and Banner.



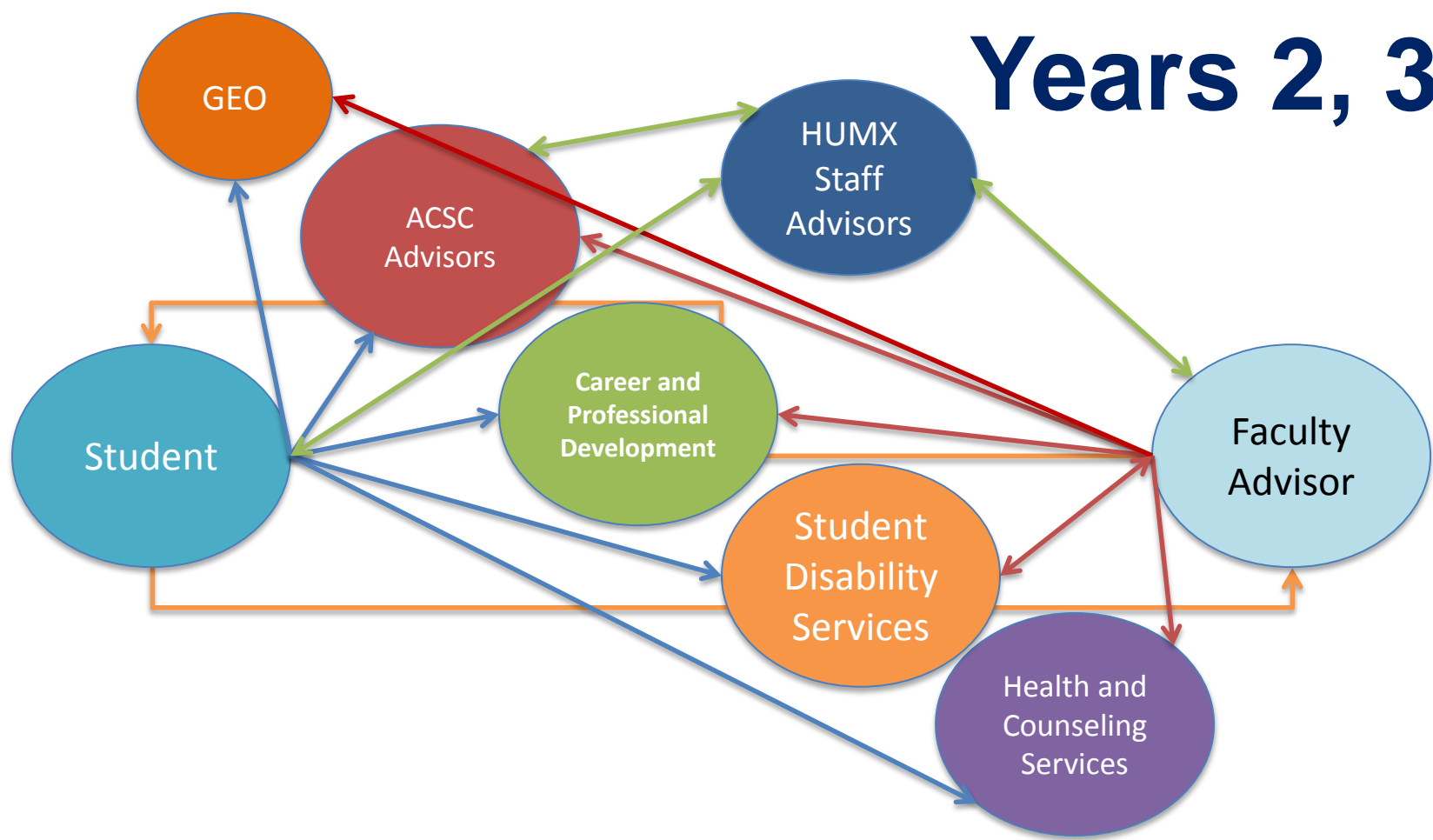
# Issues extend beyond ACSC



# “Student of Concern”



# Years 2, 3, 4





# Canvas Advisor Course: Student Resources

- First year (professional) advisors used Canvas in 15-16
- Each faculty advisor in HUMX and MBS in 16-17 has a course in Canvas (LMS); each advisee is “enrolled”
  - Students use calendar app to make advising appointments
  - Students also have modules with links to other resources
  - Faculty can use the links as well
- Modules for students
  - Registration info for specific semester
  - Registration help (waitlist)
  - Degree Plans
  - Graduation info
  - Campus Resources (links to Career/Prof. Dev., SDS, Health/Counseling)

# Canvas and Beyond: Faculty Resources

- Two ACSC professional advisors are available to help faculty advisors
- Faculty often need help with Degree Works, Canvas (HUMX staff advisors can help with those things too)

# Lessons Learned

- This is very new and continues to evolve.
- We learned recently that if each advisor files a “plan” for each advisee, it can help us know how many seats we are going to need (particularly in upper level courses).
- No one has really systematically looked at advising—this has been a great thing to do, from both the faculty and the student perspectives—focus on student needs.
- It’s good to have everyone in the room (the committee has been helpful).
- The committee was expanded to include faculty—essential perspective.
- HUMX Faculty have been very open.
- Feedback on Canvas has been great (scheduling, messaging...).
- Some faculty were worried we would take advisees away—those worries alleviated.

# Next Steps in Humanities

- Deepen collaboration with Career and Professional Development Services
  - Languages
    - Transferable skills
  - Interactive Game Studies
    - Program / internship redesign
- Leverage the Writing Center to develop help-seeking behavior
  - James D. Williams and Seiji Takaku, “Help seeking, self-efficacy, and writing performance among college students,” *Journal of Writing Research* 3.1 (2011), 1-18.

# Thank you.

St. Edward's University



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# RETENTION STRATEGIES AT QUEENS COLLEGE





# Queens College

- Established in 1937
- 150,000+ alumni strong
- Over 19,500 undergrad and graduate students
- One of the flagship four-year colleges of the City University of New York (CUNY), the country's leading public urban university system





# Our Mission



## Our mission:

- To provide a first-rate education to talented people of all backgrounds and financial means

## Our motto:

- Discimus ut serviamus - We learn so that we may serve



# Our Students

- 19,644 students: 16,349 undergraduate, 3,295 graduate
- Our student body represents over 170 countries, 110 languages spoken – a diverse community

# OASIS

## OPTIMIZING ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY

Goal: Help Close the College Graduation Rate Gap between white and underrepresented minority students (URMs).

In 2015, Education Trust, funded by the Lumina Foundation, brought together 10 regional, comprehensive institutions that serve URMs to collaborate on the creation of evidence-based practices to close this gap.

# OASIS MEMBERS

- California State University, Fresno (HSI)
- California State University, Fullerton (HSI)
- Florida International University (HSI)
- Morgan State University (HBCU)
- North Carolina A & T University (HBCU)
- North Carolina Central University (HBCU)
- Queens College, CUNY (HSI)
- University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (HSI)
- University of Houston (HSI)
- University of Memphis (urban research u.)

# TOWARD EVIDENCE-BASED SOLUTIONS

## SPECIAL CHALLENGES AT QUEENS COLLEGE

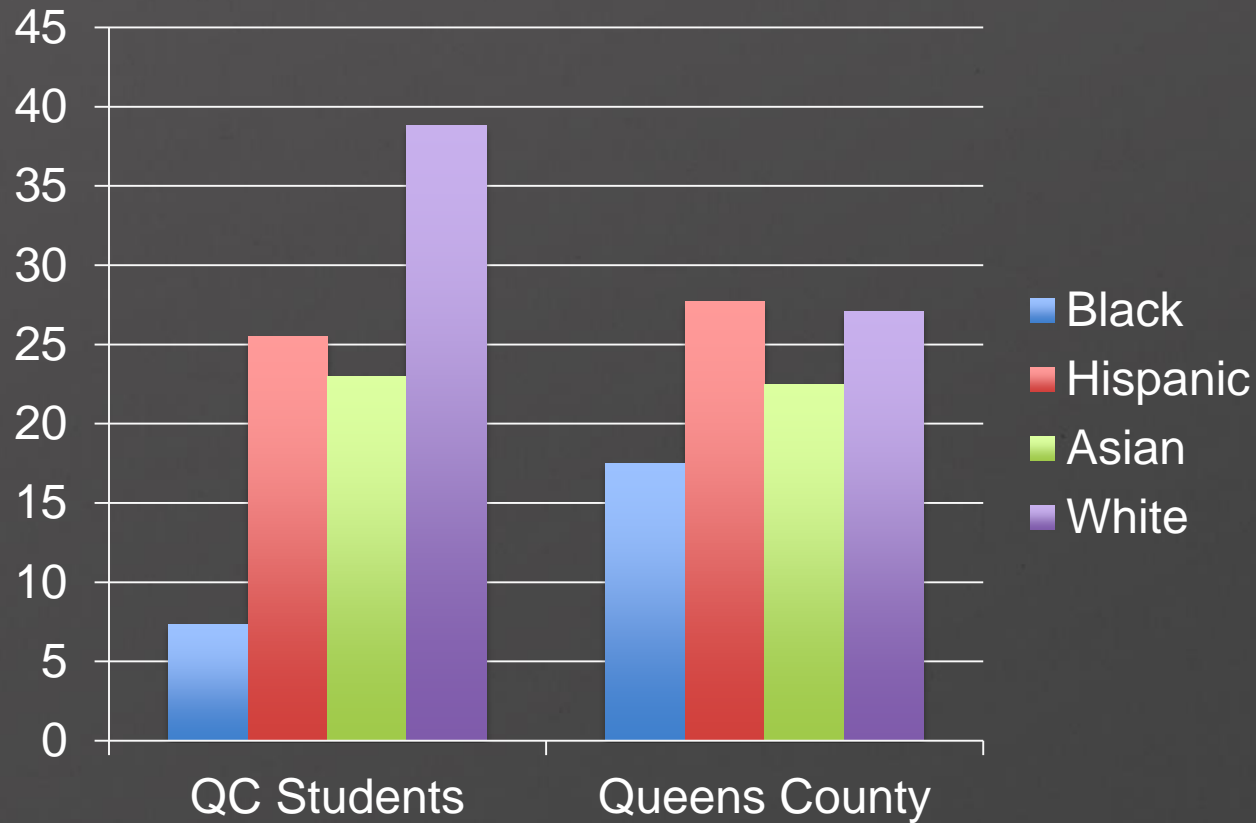
- 63% Transfer Students...and Growing!
- Over 60% URM
- 35% First in Family to Attend College
- Over Half are First-Generation Immigrants, ESL often
- Many Dreamers, Just How Many Hard to Know
- 86.8% Retention Rate for Freshmen, 79.1% for Transfers
- 33% 4-Yr Graduation Rate, 57% 6-Yr Graduation Rate

## STUDY DESIGN QUESTIONS

- What students do we lose, and when?
- For those who stay, how long do they take to graduate?



# DIVERSITY AT QUEENS COLLEGE



# GRADUATION RATE DATA

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS  
CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Metrics 1 & 2: for first-time freshmen and transfers entering in 2014 fall, % retained, % on track to graduate in 4 years, % on track to graduate in 6 years

<https://public.tableau.com/views/oasis/Metrics12>

Metrics 3 & 4: for students taking a set of courses in fall 2014 & fall 2015, % with a grade of C or better

<https://public.tableau.com/views/oasis/Metrics34>

(The courses were selected from a set of high-DFWI courses frequently taken by first-year students and new transfers.)

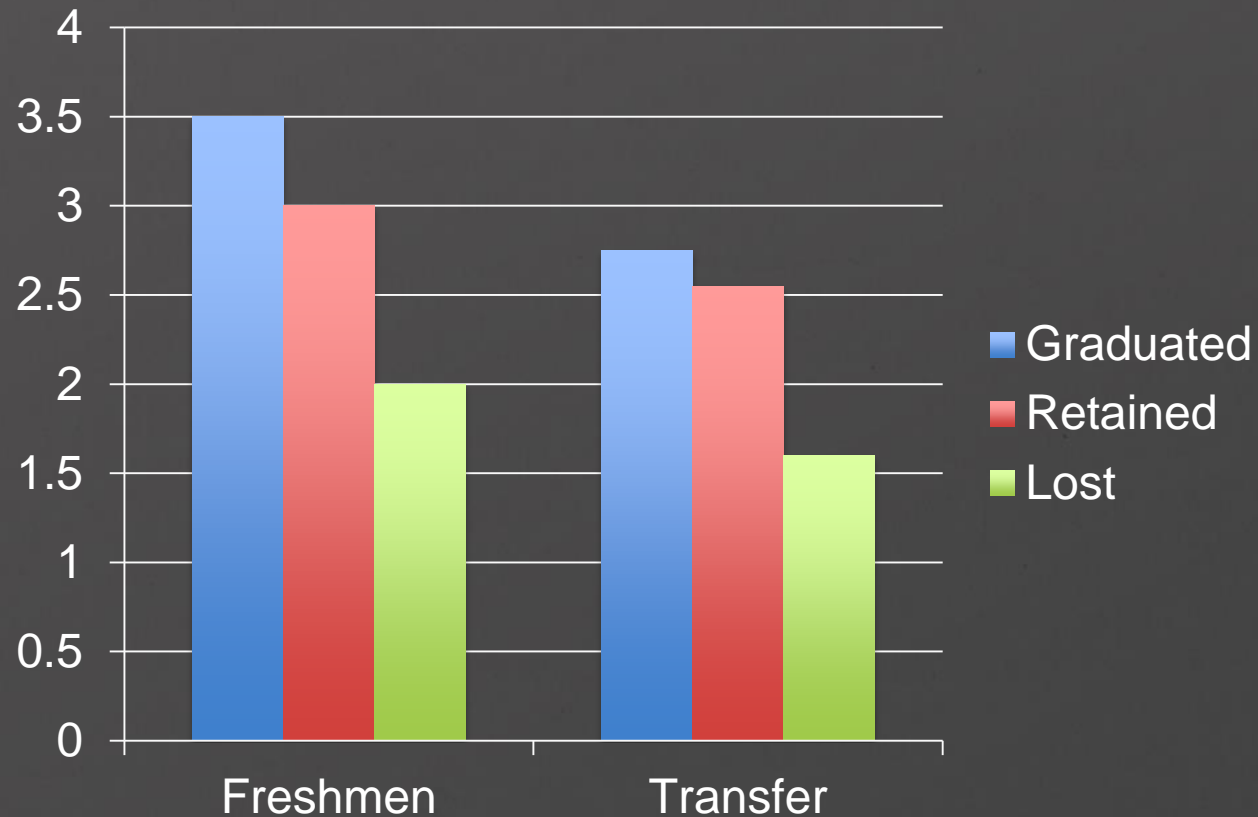
# DATA POINTS

6,966 STUDENTS (2010 & 2012)

- Who They Are? Gender, Ethnicity, Citizenship Status
- College Trajectories: Transfers vs Freshmen, Transfer Credits, GPA, Credits per Semester, etc.
- Interactions with Curricular and Institutional Support Structures: Academic Departments, Meta-Majors, Special Services, etc.

# FIRST SEMESTER GPA

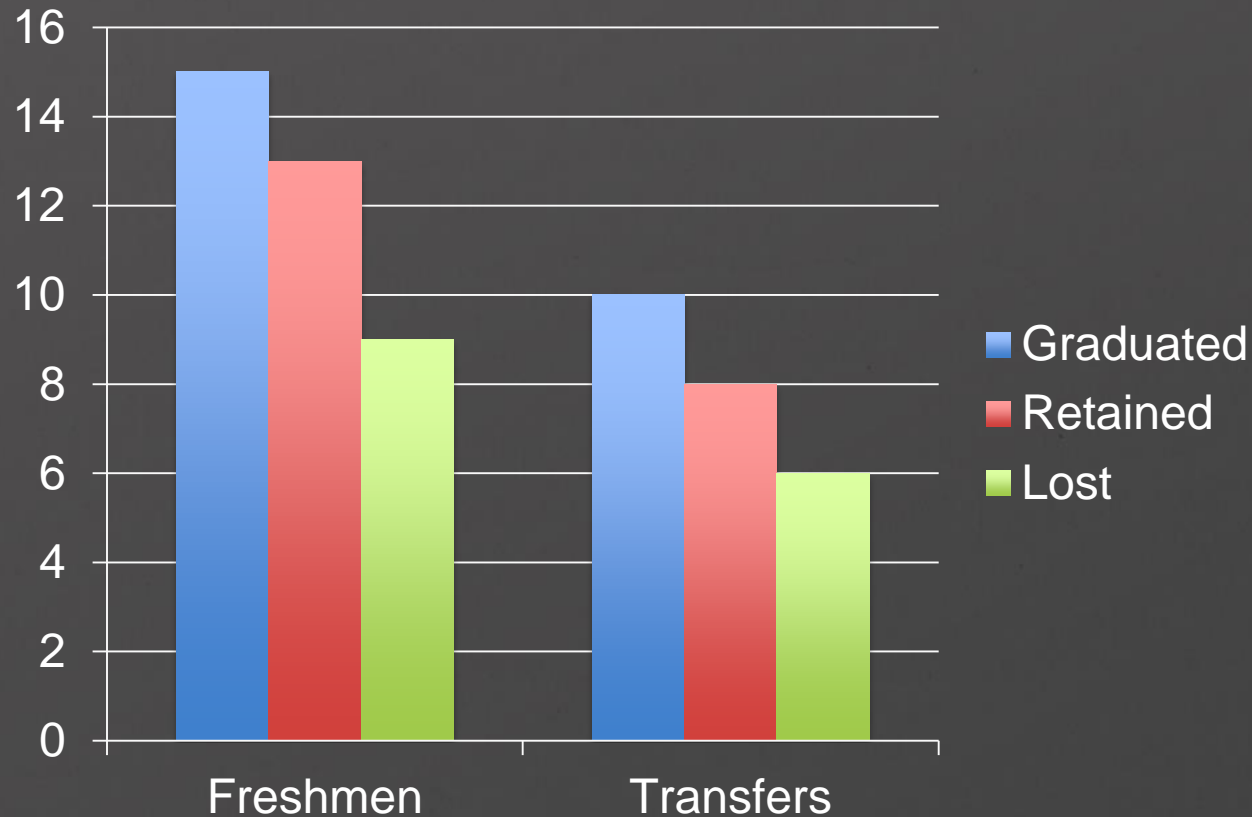
## STATUS YEAR 4



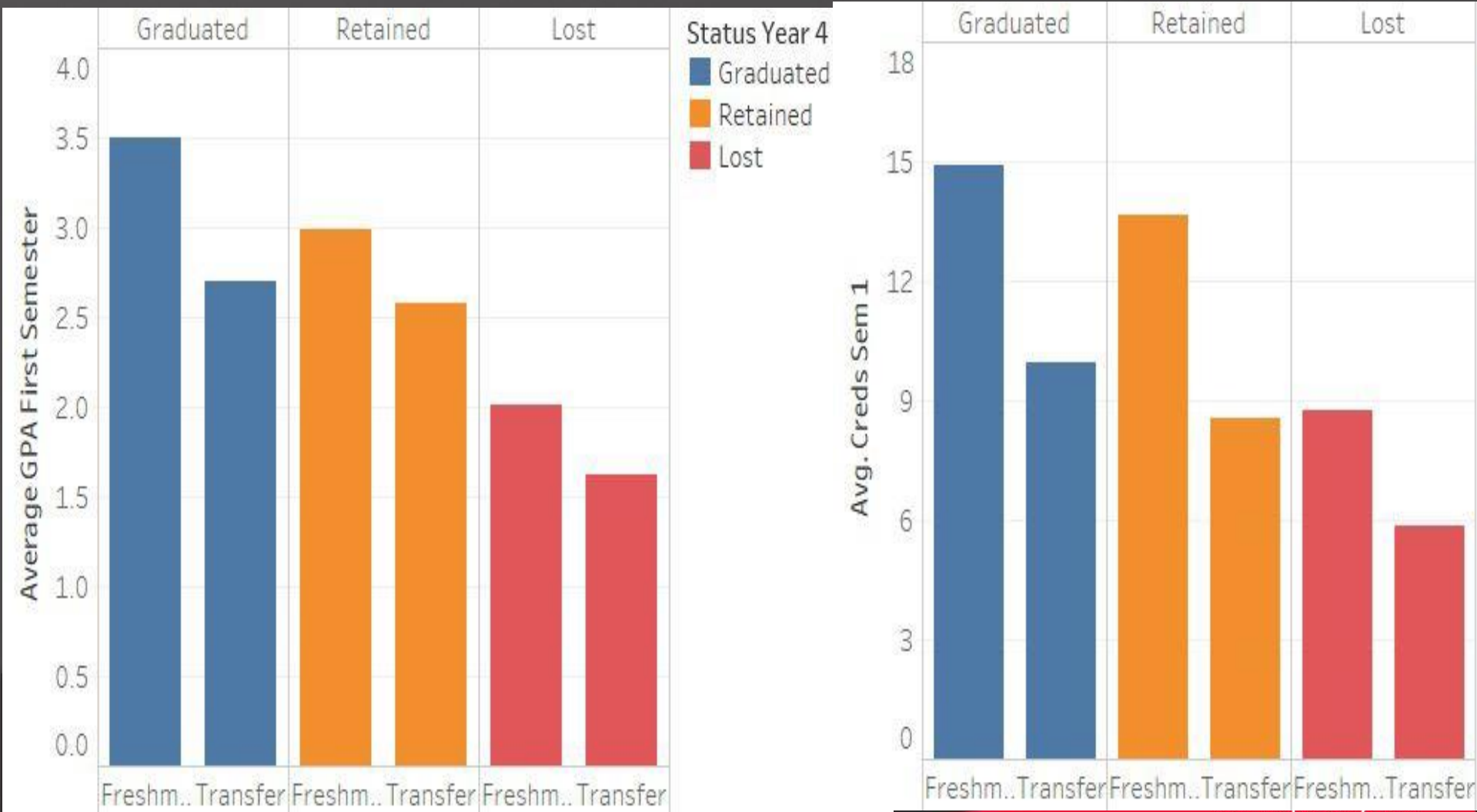


# NUMBER OF CREDITS TAKEN

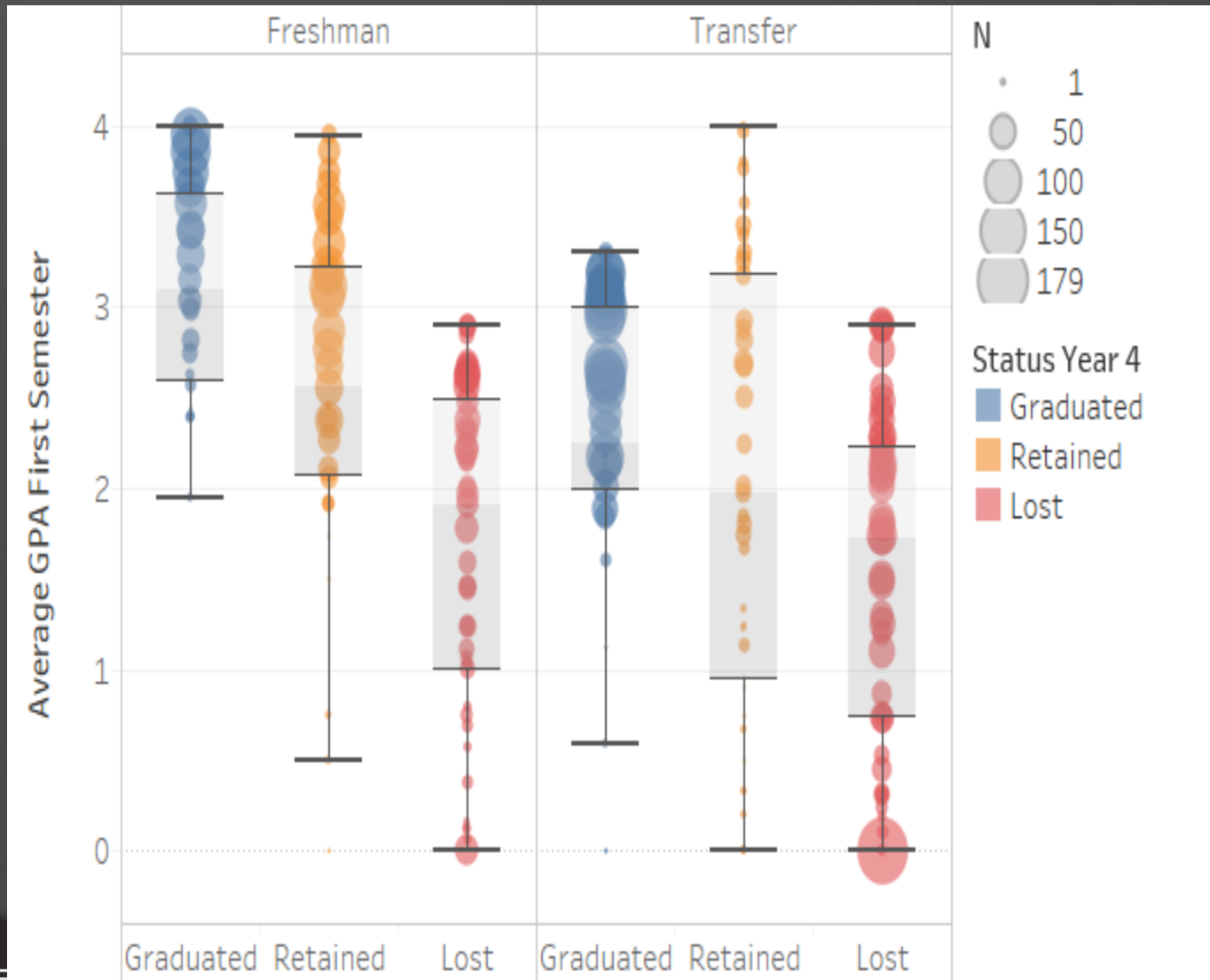
## STATUS YEAR 4



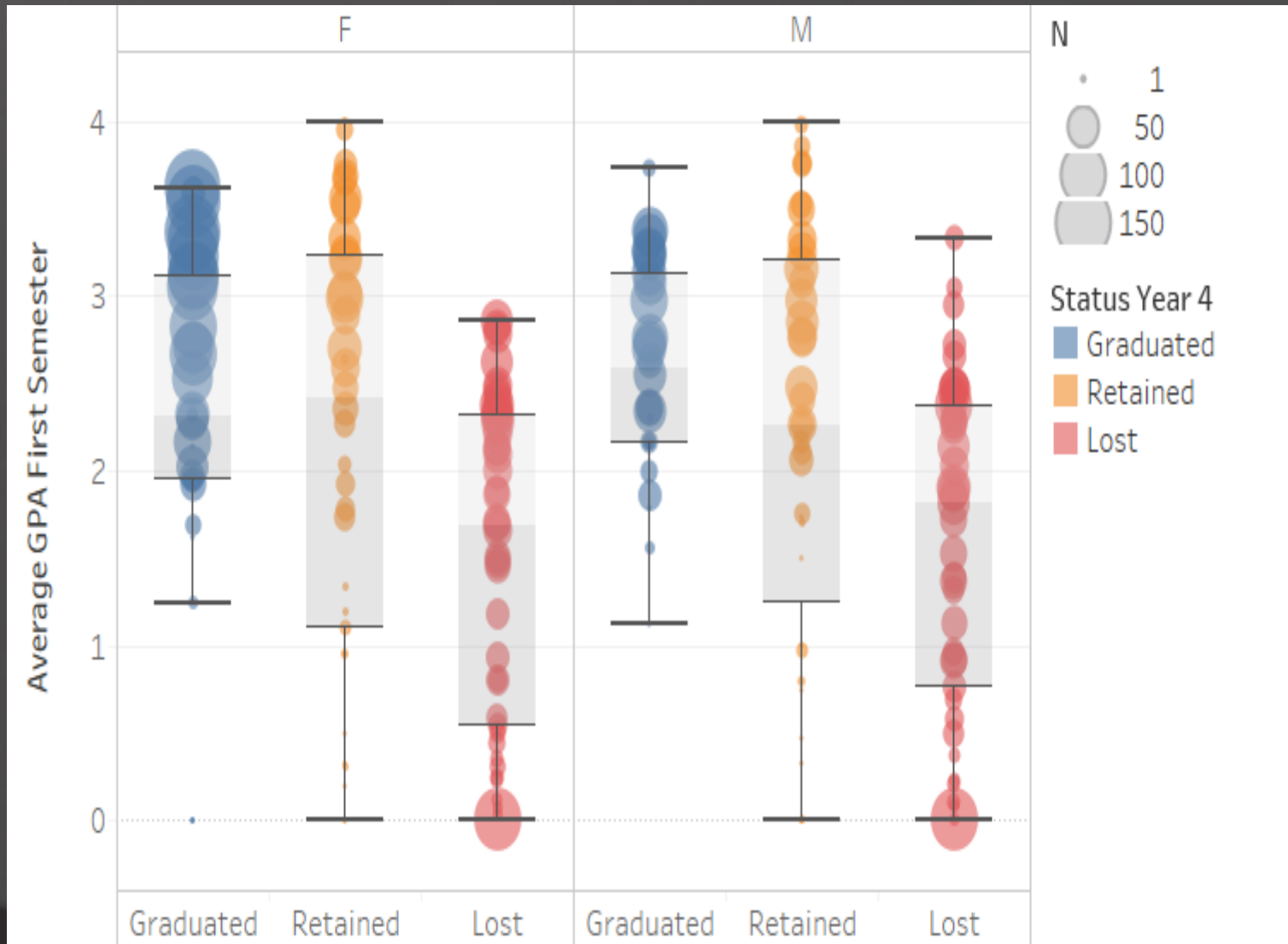
# FIRST SEMESTER GPA & NUMBER OF CREDITS TAKEN



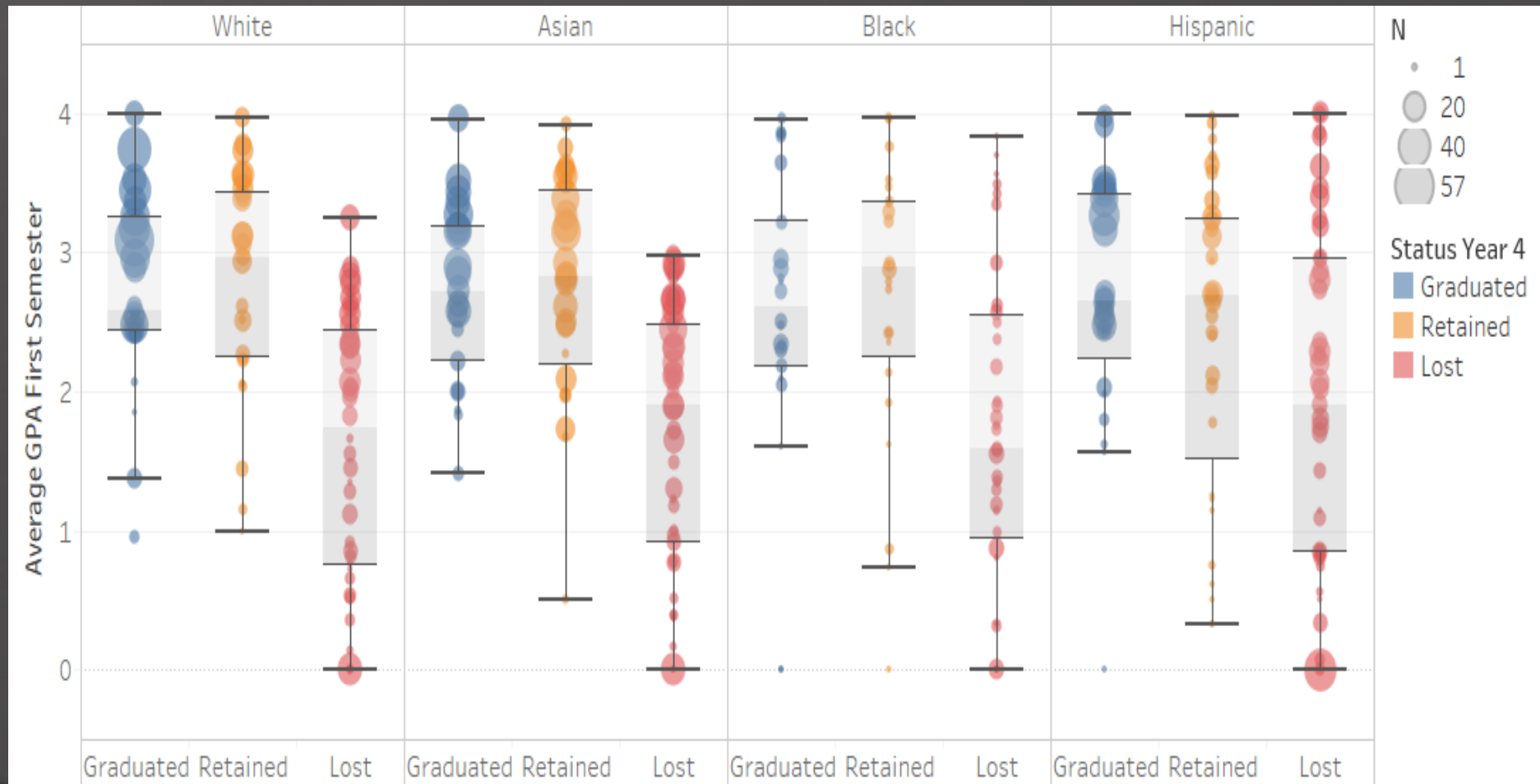
# Freshmen v. Transfers



# Women v. Men



# Ethnicity



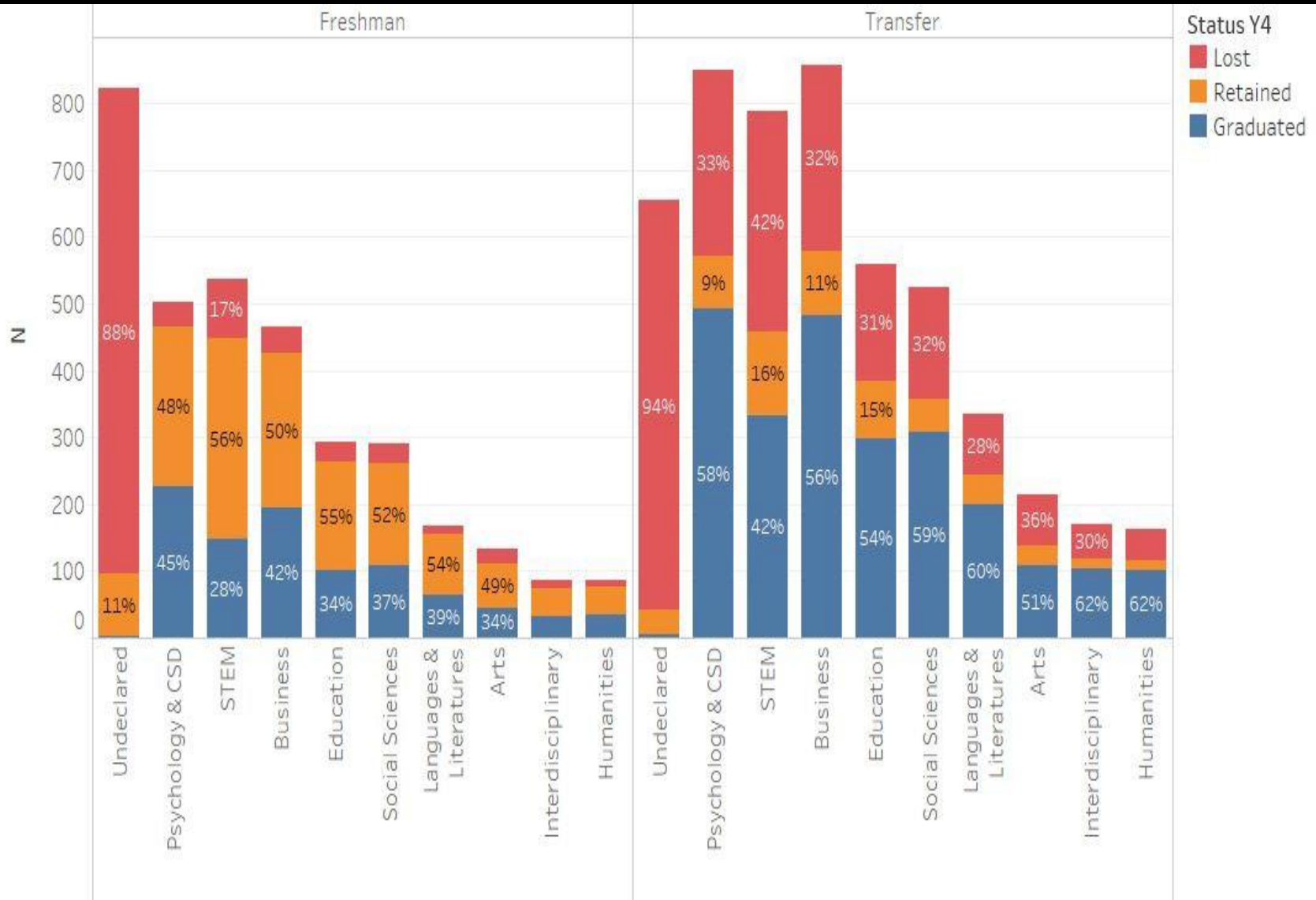
# WHO GRADUATES IN FOUR YEARS?

- Transfers (47%) more likely than Freshmen (28%)
- Women (45%) more likely than Men (31%)
- White students (43%) more likely than peers  
(Asian 32%, Black 33%, Hispanic 37%)
- Students with higher GPAs & more credits in first semester
- Students with more transfer credits (AA degree optimal)

# WHO DO WE LOSE?

- Transfers (43%) more likely than Freshmen (33%)
- Men (44%) more likely than Women (35%)
- Students with lower GPAs and Fewer Credits in First Semester
- Students with fewer Transfer Credits

# EXPLORATIONS: META-MAJORS



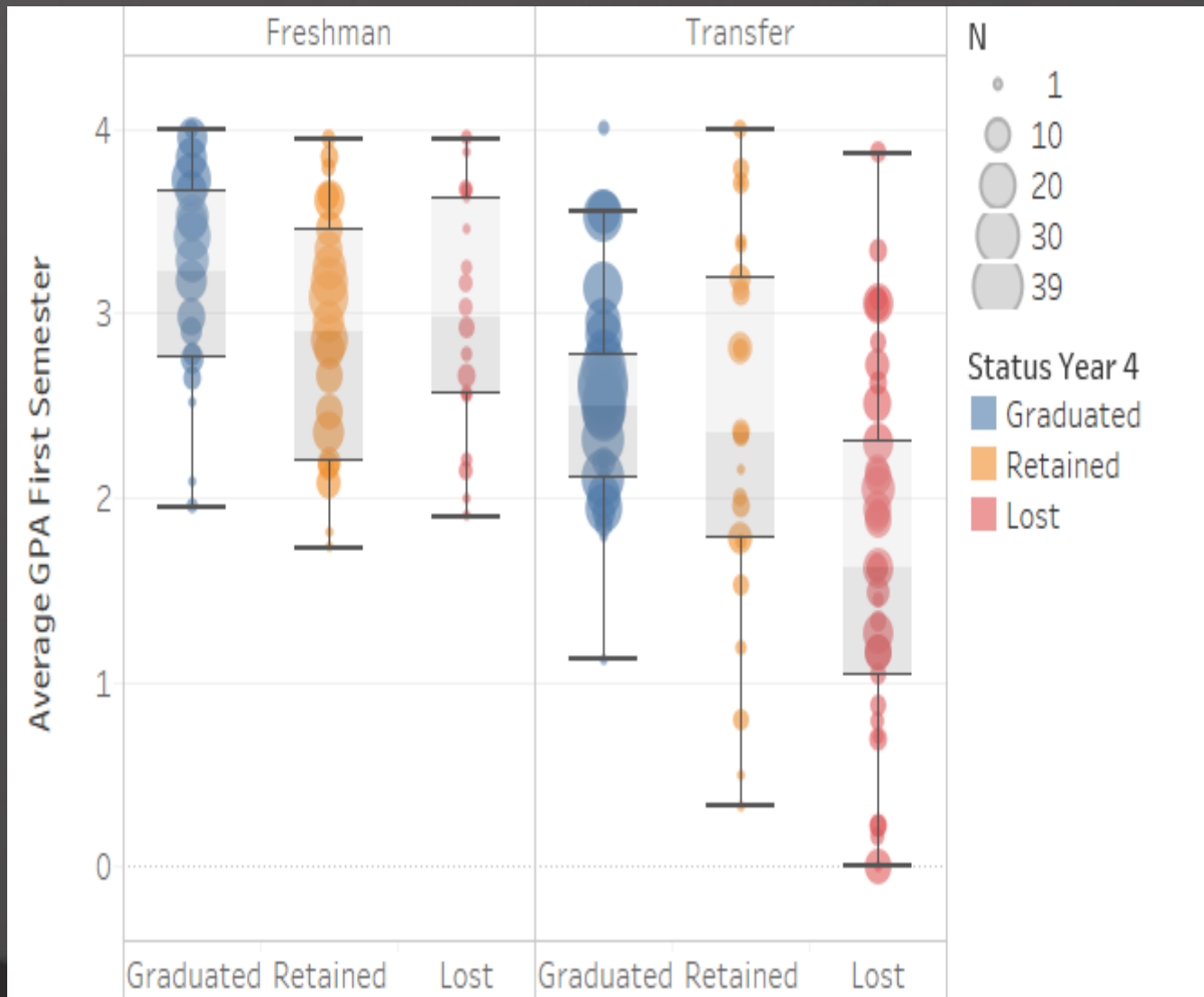


## Interest in Business Majors at QC: FALL 2016

	Majors	%College	MGPA	NMGPA	CGPA
<b>ACCT</b>	1,460	10%	2.73	2.91	2.85
<b>BBA-ACTU</b>	15	0.00%	3.37	3.4	3.33
<b>BBA-FIN</b>	126	0.01%	3.29	3.38	3.32
<b>BBA-IB</b>	46	0.00%	3.23	3.16	3.21
<b>ECON</b>	826	6%	2.84	2.94	2.88
<b>Undeclared</b>	3,860	26%	0	2.9	2.9



# Business, Economics and Accounting Majors



# Top High Fail/Withdrawal Rates in College

ACCT 101	5.4% failed + 15% withdrew = 20.4%	#10
BUS 241	6.2% failed + 11.9% withdrew = 18.1%	#11
ECON 101	3.1% failed + 10.4% withdrew = 13.5%	#13
ECON 102	6.3% failed + 8.3% withdrew = 14.6%	#14
ECON 201	11.2% failed + 14.6% withdrew = 25.1%	#7
ECON 202	14% failed + 11.2 % withdrew = 25.2%	#6

# STUDENTS WHO LEFT: A LOOK AT BUSINESS MAJORS

## SPRING 2015 TO FALL 2016

TOTAL	>2.00 gpa 1,717	<2.00 gpa 773
ACCT	176 (10%)	90 (12%)
ECON	87 (5%)	56 (7%)
BBA-ACTST	0	0
BBA-FIN	16 (1%)	1
BBA-IB	4	2
UNDECLARED	404 (24%)	305 (39%)

Percentages not returning aligns with percentages in the major



# PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Embed Advisement and Career Service Personnel in Academic Divisions
- Connect Students to the Right Major Early On
- Departmental Dashboards and Action Plans for At-Risk Students
- Use Grades & Credits Completed to Identify & Support At-Risk Students
- Enhance Faculty Expertise in Culturally-Sensitive Teaching Techniques
- Develop Diagnostic Testing for New Students to Detect Problems Early
- Advise Student about Advantages of Taking >15 credits
- Introduce Career Objectives at the Outset.
- Expand Experiential Education
- Connect Tutoring Resources directly with High-Risk Courses
- Tie Curricular and Co-Curricular Elements to Measure Student Success

LOTS OF WORK TO BE DONE!! WISH US LUCK!!