Instruments Designed to Identify *"At-Risk"* Students at College Entry

This may be considered to be the most proactive of all approaches to early intervention for at-risk students because an attempt is made to identify these students by assessing their self-reported attitudes and behaviors at *college entry* (e.g., at orientation or during the first week of class).

Listed below is a sample of some of the major instruments that have been used to identify students who may be at risk for college attrition or academic failure.

The Student Readiness Inventory (SRI) (ACT)
The SRI is comprised of the following 10 scales:
Academic Discipline—the amount of effort a student puts into schoolwork and the degree which the student is hardworking and conscientious.
Academic Self-Confidence—belief in one's ability to perform well in school.
Commitment to College—one's commitment to staying college and getting a degree.
Communication Skills—attentiveness to others' feelings and flexibility in resolving conflicts with
   others.
Emotional Control—one's responses to and management of strong feelings.
General Determination—extent to which one strives to follow through on commitments and
   obligations.
Goal Striving—strength of one's efforts to achieve objectives and end goals.
Social Activity—one's comfort in meeting and interacting with other people.
Social Connection—one's feelings of connection and involvement with the college community.
Study Skills—the extent to which students believe they know how to assess an academic
   problem, organize a solution, and successfully complete academic assignments.

For more information, go to http://www.act.org/sri/
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* College Student Inventory (CSI) (Noel-Levitz)
   Intended for administration during new-student orientation or the first week(s) of class, this instrument asks students to respond on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from "not at all true" to "completely true," to a series of statements that purportedly tap key cognitive and affective indicators of potential attrition (e.g., "I am very strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in my way." "I plan to transfer to another school sometime before completing my degree at this college or university.") The inventory is available in two forms—short (30 minutes) and comprehensive (60 minutes), and three reports are generated to facilitate individualized interventions. (www.noellevitz.com/rms)
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* The College Success Factors Index (CSFI) (Hallberg & Davis)
   Contains 80 self-scoring statements designed to assess college readiness during the early weeks of college by measuring eight factors that are purportedly related to "academic aptitude," namely: (a) responsibility/control, (b) competition, (c) task precision, (d) expectations, (e) wellness, (f) time management, (g) college/school involvement, and (h) family involvement. The test is self-scored and same-day printouts can be generated that include individual students' total and subtest scores, plus a "watchline" or danger zone indicator for scores falling below the statistical average. (www.csfi-wadsworth.com)

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* Transition to College Inventory (TCI) (Pickering, Calliotte, & McAuliffe)
   This is an extensive survey that has been designed to assess "noncognitive" variables among freshmen, such as attitudes, opinions, and self-ratings. These noncognitive variables are designed to yield a "probation score" and are assessed via items that measure whether students': (a) have well-

defined career plans, (b) plan to obtain a degree, (c) consider the university to be the major focus of their lives, and (d) plan to work 11 or more hours per week during the first semester.

   When compared with the traditional cognitive measures used in the college-admission process (i.e., standardized test scores and high school academic performance) with respect to their ability to predict academic problems and attrition during the first year of college, the noncognitive predictors alone resulted in higher "hit" rates (accurate predictions of academic or retention problems) than did use of cognitive predictors alone. In fact, the cognitive predictors alone could not correctly identify any first-year students in academic difficulty, nor could they correctly identify any freshmen who did not return for their second year.

   For information on this instrument, see: Pickering, J. W., Calliotte, J. A., & McAuliffe, G. J. (1992). The effect of noncognitive factors on freshman academic performance and retention. *Journal of The Freshman Year Experience, 4*(2), 7-30.

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* EQ-i:S Post Secondary

   The EQ-I is the first validated measure of emotional intelligence, and the first of its kind to be peer reviewed in the Buros Mental Measurements Yearbook. Student scores on this instrument have been empirically linked to student success in a number of published works.
For further information, go to www.mhs.com

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* Anticipated Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (ASACQ) (Baker & Schultz).

   This inventory asks students to rank their experience in college by using statements in four subsets: (a) social adjustment, (b) academic adjustment, (c) personal adjustment, and (d) institutional & goal commitment. An "intent-to-persist" score is generated by computing a student's average score for eight particular statements that have been embedded in the instrument.

Baker, R. W., & Schultz, K. L. (1992). Measuring expectations about college adjustment. *NACADA Journal, 12*(2), 23-32.

Instruments Designed to Identify At-Risk Students' Learning *Habits, Attitudes, & Motivation*

* Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI); also available in electronic form (E-LASSI) (Weinstein).

   A 77-item instrument that takes about 20 minutes to complete and contains subscales relating to attitude, motivation, time management, anxiety, concentration, information processing, selecting main ideas, study aids, self-testing, and test-taking.
(A free sample packet is available upon request from the publisher: hhservice@hhpublishing.com, which includes a self-scoring form, user's manual, and pricing information. For further info about the instrument, you can review the Web version, or you could download a copy of the User's Manual (PDF) from the following link: http://www.hhpublishing.com/_assessments/LASSI/samples.html

* Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) (Pintrich & McKeachie)

   Similar to the LASSI, the MSLQ is a self-report questionnaire that takes about 25 minutes to complete. It's based on the same general information processing model as the LASSI, but there are a few differences: (1) The motivational scales are based on a general social-cognitive approach to motivation that includes three key components: values, expectancy, and affect. (2) It organizes its cognitive scales into general cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies (a.k.a., "executive processes" that plan and direct learning. (3) Its last general category of scales includes resource management factors.
(For further information about this instrument, contact the Department of Psychology, University of Michigan.)

* Study Behavior Inventory (SBI)
   This instrument is designed to efficiently evaluate students' learning skills and attitudes, as well as refer them to campus-specific personnel and programs that can be of help. It can be completed in less than 15 minutes and consists of 46 self-report items relating to (a) academic confidence (e.g., self-esteem & locus of control), (b) short-term study behaviors (e.g., note-taking & reading), and (c) long-term study behaviors (e.g., exam preparation and writing research papers). It also provides "proficiency statements" on students' performance in specific areas relating to student success, namely: time-management, study-reading, general study habits, listening/note-taking, writing, test-anxiety, test-taking, and faculty relations. (To access more extensive info on this instrument, go to the following website: www.sbi4windows.com.) (Information on this instrument also appeared in the *Journal of Developmental Education, 21*[2] [Winter], 1997.)

* Achievement Motivation Profile (AMP) (Mandel, Friedland, & Marcus)
   A less well-known instrument that has been designed to assess academic motivation, and to detect "academic underachievers." Its content derives primarily from research reported in the book, *Psychology of Underachievement* by Mandel & Marcus. It was originally developed for use with high school students but users claim it is equally applicable to college students.
   The instrument is said to be available from WPS (Western Psychological Society), or contact Peter Walsh, who works in learning support services at Ryerson Polytechnic University in Toronto, Canada (pwalsh@acs.ryerson.ca)

* Behavioral and Attitudinal Predictors of Academic Success Scale (BAPASS)
  (Wilkie & Redondo)
  This is an instrument designed to identify first-year students who are likely to be placed on academic probation, which was developed by Carolyn Wilkie and Brian Redondo at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. This instrument consists of 48 items with four subscales: (a) academic behaviors & motivators, (b) stressors, (c) goals, and (d) alcohol & parties. [For information on this instrument, see the following reference: Wilkie, C., & Redondo, B. (1996). Predictors of academic success and failure of first-year college students. *Journal of The Freshman Year Experience, 8*(2), 17-32.]

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