

President's Definition of Retention at Clarion University
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The Clarion University mission indicates that we will recruit, admit, and graduate “qualified and motivated” students. Further, the university espouses as one of its core values a belief in the learning potential of all of its students willing to invest hard work in the pursuit of their education. The admissions and retention practices of the university, then, must be consistent with the public responsibility that we espouse and the beliefs that we hold.

At Clarion University, we admit students who we genuinely believe can be successful that is, graduate from our academic programs. While the university aggressively seeks students with the best possible qualifications, it recognizes and fulfills its responsibility to “advance higher education as a public good,” by providing access to Pennsylvania citizens.

The student body that results from embracing this kind of admissions philosophy will have a broad and heterogeneous student profile. While two thirds of our incoming classes will be those characterized as being fully prepared and able to enter academic life as “regular” university students, a significant number of entering students will need some kind of support in order to be successful. This is attributable to the fact that Clarion University, more than the great majority of universities, has students that come from “first-time-in-college” families, from family backgrounds characterized by low income, from poor school districts in rural and urban areas, and from other situations that contribute to a somewhat lower student preparedness to undertake the rigor of university programs.

Clarion University faculty, staff, and administration are committed to helping students complete their educational experiences by providing serious academic support, effective academic advising and professional counseling, and an academic environment in which success is expected. This means that retention of all students motivated toward success and willing to expend the requisite personal effort becomes the Clarion University goal.

Clarion University has been particularly successful in achieving higher than expected retention of its students. Despite a student profile that might suggest other outcomes, Clarion students achieve at or above standards found in nationally competitive and accredited academic programs. But this performance represents only a base from which significant retention improvement must flow. Recalling that the university admits only those students it believes can be successful, it has an obligation to assist students in accomplishment of their academic goals in every practical way.

Clarion University will identify creative and effective admissions and retention strategies that will contribute directly to student success.