



Transition to College Inventory

The TCI Can ...

- **Identify** first year students prone to academic difficulty and attrition
- Assist advisors to **intervene** with at-risk students using an easily interpreted individual advising profile
- Provide data that can be used to **describe** the entering class

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Transition to College Inventory

After more than 10 years of development and testing with thousands of students, the developers of the *Transition to College Inventory (TCI)* invite other institutions to use the *TCI* to identify and treat first year students at risk for academic difficulty and subsequent attrition.

In the 1996 book *Assessment in Practice*, Banta and associates cited Old Dominion University (ODU) as an example of an institution that “uses assessment data to drive improvements in an area of particular concern, its persistence rates. Since it is imperative that students stay in school in order to obtain the

benefits that accrue from a college education, the university has intentionally designed an assessment strategy focused on this one goal” (p. 22). In 2002 ODU received a Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Commendation in part for the development and use of the *TCI*. And later that same year, the *TCI* (formerly called the Old Dominion University Freshman Survey) was discussed

in an invited essay on the First Year Assessment (FYA) listserv. Continuing development of the



TCI has included a major revision of the instrument based on factor analyses (2003) and pilot testing at four diverse institutions (2004-05) resulting in further revisions to insure effectiveness at a broad range of institutions.

What is the Transition to College Inventory?

The TCI...

- ◆ is a **noncognitive measure** designed to enhance the predictions of academic performance and retention. Our research indicates that it adds significantly to the prediction of academic difficulty and attrition based only on cognitive (high school GPA, SAT scores) and/or demographic (gender, race, first generation) factors.
- ◆ produces data for a highly descriptive **first year class profile** that adds considerable information to an institution’s understanding of its entering class.
- ◆ yields the **TCI Index** used for early identification of first year students predicted to be at-risk for academic difficulty at the end of their first semester.
- ◆ generates an **individualized TCI Advising Profile** that provides both the **TCI Index** and the responses to all of the items that contribute to the **TCI Index** for each student. Academic advisors and/or counselors can then review the Profile with the student early in the first semester and make plans to remediate specific potential barriers to college success.
- ◆ was **completely revised in 2003** using a data set of four years (1999-2002) of *TCI* data ($N = 5684$).
- ◆ was **pilot tested in 2004-05** with four additional institutions ($N = 2734$) resulting in a **revised TCI Index** that more accurately identifies at-risk students at a variety of types of four year institutions.

Research

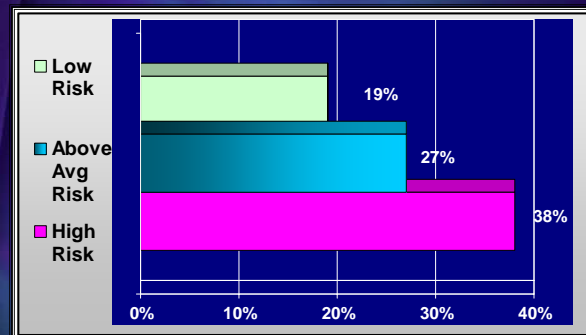
The effectiveness of the *TCI* has been assessed in several ways. The most important test of the *TCI* is how well it performs in identifying students at risk for academic difficulty and subsequent attrition. Based on their *TCI Index*, students are identified as low risk (scores of 0-5), above average risk (scores of 6-8) or high risk (scores of 9 and above). Research based on the ODU data revealed that 38% of the high risk first year students were in academic difficulty after their first semester compared to 19% of the low risk group. Similarly, 30% of the high risk group did not return for their sophomore year versus 19% of the low risk group. Finally, only 32% of the high risk group graduated in 6 years while 50% of the low risk group graduated in that time.

As part of the validation process the *TCI* was tested at other institutions. In 2004-05 the *TCI* was pilot tested at four additional institutions to test its effectiveness in more diverse settings. As with the ODU sample, 43% of the high risk students were in academic difficulty at the end of their first semester compared to 13% of the low risk students.

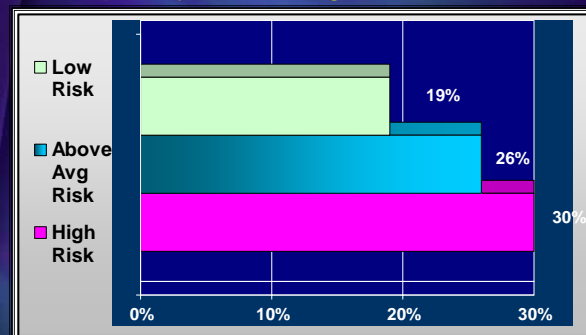
Finally, the *TCI* has been factor analyzed revealing nine factors, of which five (*) were significantly related to academic performance at the end of the first semester.

- ◆ College Involvement
- ◆ Influences on College Choice
- ◆ Student Role Commitment *
- ◆ Athletic Orientation *
- ◆ Personal / Academic Concerns
- ◆ Self-Confidence *
- ◆ Institutional Commitment
- ◆ Socializing Orientation *
- ◆ Independent Activity Focus *

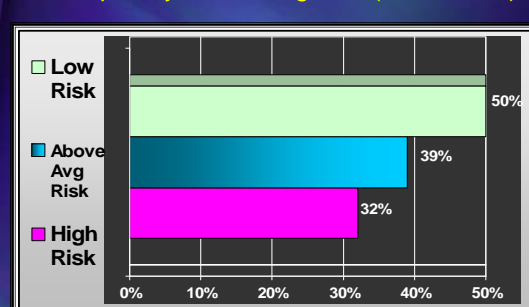
First Semester Academic Difficulty Rate by *TCI Index*
Grouped by Risk Categories (2003 Class)



Freshman to Sophomore Attrition by *TCI Index*
Grouped by Risk Categories (2003 Class)



6-Year Graduation Rates by *TCI Index*
Grouped by Risk Categories (1998 Class)



Invitation to Participate

The *TCI* has proven to be very effective in identifying first year students who are at-risk for academic difficulty and attrition and who otherwise were not identified using cognitive predictors alone.

Institutions that are interested in the early identification and treatment of at-risk students are invited to use the *TCI*. Our goal is to make the *TCI* available to as many institutions as are interested at as reasonable a cost as possible.

In addition, institutions that are willing to participate in the continuing validation study can use the *TCI* at a reduced cost.



For those using the *TCI*, ODU will...

- ◆ provide an original copy of the *TCI* for copying at your institution.
- ◆ provide the required number of scannable answer forms.
- ◆ scan the answer forms.
- ◆ produce a class profile.
- ◆ produce individual *TCI* Advising Profiles and *TCI* Student Profiles, and
- ◆ provide an institutional data set for your further analyses.

All institutions will be asked to send electronic data files to ODU containing...

- ◆ entering first year student demographic and cognitive data (e.g., gender, race, high school GPA, SAT/ACT); high school GPA and SAT/ACT scores will be added to the *TCI* Advising Profile for those supplying data.

Institutions participating in the continuing validation of the *TCI* (at reduced cost) will be asked to send electronic data files to ODU containing...

- ◆ fall and spring GPA's for all participants at the end of each of these semesters.
- ◆ an indicator of whether or not each participant has returned to the institution for the fall semester of the following (sophomore) year.

A web version of the *TCI* is also available. The primary consideration in using the web version is that the *TCI* works best in a proctored setting. For more information, please contact the authors.

THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE INVENTORY

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We're on the web at:
www.odu.edu/tci

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Transition to College Inventory

Benefits and Costs of Participation

Benefits

- ◆ Opportunity to identify and treat at-risk first year students early in their academic career before they adopt or continue counterproductive habits
- ◆ Opportunity to receive a highly descriptive first year class profile and an institutional data set
- ◆ Opportunity to receive custom reports if desired

Cost

- ◆ \$3.00 per completed survey for first 500 (minimum charge \$750)
- ◆ \$2.00 per completed survey for 501-1000 surveys
- ◆ \$1.00 per completed survey for each survey over 1000
- ◆ \$100 per custom report OR \$100 per hour

Continuing Validation Study Costs (special rate for 2 years)

The goal of the validation study is to continue testing the effectiveness of the *TCI* Index for identifying students at risk for academic difficulty at other institutions. In order to accomplish this goal, during the first year of administration only we must collect the *TCI* data plus fall GPAs **before** providing individual student results of the *TCI* Index to your institution. We will provide the institutional profile data for the first year class early in the fall semester but will not provide individualized *TCI* Advising Profiles until after the end of the first semester. Thus, for those in the continuing validation study, interventions will not be possible during the first fall semester. Individual data will be provided early in the fall during the second year (still at the reduced cost) for intervention purposes.

Cost

- ◆ \$2.00 per completed survey for first 500 (minimum charge \$500)
- ◆ \$1.00 per completed survey for 501-1000 surveys
- ◆ \$.50 per completed survey for each survey over 1000
- ◆ \$100 per custom report OR \$100 per hour

For Further Information

Contact either:

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to discuss the details of your participation. Upon receipt of the \$750 deposit, ODU will mail an original copy of the instrument for copying at the institution and ship the required number of blank answer forms.

