

Executive Summary

The PAR Framework is a collaborative, multi-institutional effort that brings together two-year, four-year, public, proprietary, traditional, and progressive institutions to collaborate on identifying points of student loss. PAR is focused on using predictive analytics to improve student success. Current efforts focus on online and blended programs. Deliverables include flexible predictive models, openly published common data definitions, and a student success matrix that links predictions with interventions and student supports, making predictions actionable. With 16 WCET member institutions, over 1.8 million anonymized student records, and 13.1 million institutionally de-identified course-level records, the PAR Framework offers educational stakeholders a unique multi-institutional lens for examining dimensions of student success.

The PAR Framework is constructed using common data definitions for core measures across institutions to identify patterns that impact and influence student success. Predictive analytics methodologies and data mining techniques are applied to the PAR dataset of student anonymized and institutionally de-identified information to identify the factors that impact student success and momentum towards completing a post-secondary credential with a focus on at-risk, first time, transfer and non-traditional students.

PAR Framework member institutions provide a full set of anonymized undergraduate student data that allows for comparative investigation of student success trends over time, at the individual student, course and degree level. PAR members provide periodic updates of their data ensuring the ability to measure changes over time, the impact of student interventions and enabling the predictive models that PAR produces to be adjusted and tuned for current data.

PAR Framework Member Benefits

Actionable Predictive Models Once institutions deliver their student-anonymized and institutionally de-identified data to the PAR Framework team, member institutions quickly receive models that predict, down to the individual student level, the likelihood a student will achieve institutional specific milestones, including passing a course, obtaining a GPA at a certain level, or remaining at the institution from period to period. PAR researchers and data scientists use statistical and data mining techniques to identify the factors that most impact student success in the combined sample and the individual institution level.

Member institutions receive:

- Institutionally anonymized and de-identified information about the entire sample that yield global insights about retention patterns in US higher education to inform practice and policy.
- Individual academic risk models that can be used to create watch lists, structure interventions and inform local decisions about the factors identified as having the greatest impact on student success.

Powerful tools for benchmarking student services and interventions - PAR Student Success Matrix (SSM^X)

The benchmarking capabilities of the PAR Framework Student Success Matrix (SSM^X) help institutions comprehensively assess their student success policies and programs. The SSM^X makes it possible to organize the wide variety of student supports – from orientation to mentoring to advising– into a systematic validated framework designed to quantify the impact of student success practices and determine the best support for students at the point of need.

Quantified intervention effectiveness results PAR Framework member institutions are encouraged to take part in quantitative, closed loop field tests, measuring the effect of targeted student supports, e.g. tutoring, student services, email, text messages alerts, against at-risk students. The common PAR measures for assessing and predicting risk and the validated frameworks categorizing student support services create the mechanism to effectively measure the impact of student supports within and across institutions. All PAR Framework member institutions, regardless of whether or not they participate in field tests have access to the results of the field tests, and the subsequent findings about the types of interventions that are most effective for certain pools of students identified as at-risk.

Institutional Benchmarks PAR Framework members receive institutionally-reflective and cross institutional benchmark reports of student level outcomes at the course, modality, program, degree, and institution level. These graphical reports enable comparisons between institutions with similar profiles and between an individual institution and the aggregate dataset of all PAR institutions. Examples of benchmark areas include:

- Student demographics
- Financial aid profiles
- Course size
- Student course completion/ success
- Course success variations between online and face to face courses
- Program retention rate/pass rate
- Degree retention rate/pass rate

Participation in a collaborative community of experts PAR Framework members represent an engaged community of forward thinking institutions, each with perspective and practices around student retention, progression, and completion. PAR membership provides institutional leaders with the models, technical support, services, and guidance needed to evaluate techniques, tools and solutions used to improve student outcomes. PAR provides the collaborative environment needed to support policy implementation and effective practice guidance necessary to capitalize on the power of data-driven decision-making for improving student success in reliable, repeatable, scalable ways.

Partner institutions:

- [American Public University System*](#)
- [Ashford University](#)
- [Broward College](#)
- [Capella University](#)
- [Colorado Community College System*](#)
- [Troy University](#)
- [Lone Star College System](#)
- [Penn State World Campus](#)
- [Rio Salado College*](#)
- [Sinclair Community College](#)
- [University of Central Florida](#)
- [University of Hawaii System*](#)
- [University of Illinois Springfield*](#)
- [University of Maryland University College](#)
- [University of Phoenix*](#)
- [Western Governors University](#)

**denotes founding partner*