

# 75 Strategic Research Questions Community Colleges Could Answer with Better Data

Strategic research questions are a way of making sure your college is working toward continuous improvement, uncovering student barriers, and finding ways to increase efficiency. EAB community college partners leverage Edify, EAB's data and analytics solution, to connect disparate data sources, answer key research questions, and tell a more holistic story about how their college is performing. Use the questions below to frame your institution's data strategy.



Who should be asking the question: ● Cabinet Level ● Manager Level

## ENROLLMENT AND REVENUE GROWTH

1	What percentage of students who are not admitted to limited enrollment programs are being retained at the college?	●
2	Where are new students most likely to fall out of the enrollment funnel?	●
3	What high schools are our new students coming from?	●
4	Are there specific academic advisors who have students who are outperforming?	●
5	Which zip codes do most of our students come from? Which 10 zip codes are most underrepresented?	●
6	What are retention rates for adult students, and have they changed over time?	●
7	Which programs yield highest enrollment of adult learners?	●
8	Which programs receive the most inquiries and applications?	●
9	How long does it take a new student to move between each enrollment step?	●
10	Which high schools have the most dual enrollment students who go on to complete a credential at the college?	●
11	Which students are most likely to move from noncredit programs into degree-seeking programs?	●
12	What is the average number of credits students are leaving with when they transfer out?	●
13	Which marketing campaigns are driving the greatest prospective student engagement?	●
14	Which recruitment events generate the greatest inquiry and applicant yield?	●
15	Is there a correlation between attending an open house and enrolling at the college?	●
16	What percentage of our Pell-eligible students are awarded annually, and what is their average award?	●
17	How has our short-term credential enrollment changed over time?	●

## ACADEMY AND FISCAL RESILIENCE

18	Which sections of courses have the highest pass rates?	●
19	Does tutoring correlate with higher course pass rates and higher GPAs?	●
20	Are students who are D/F/W in gatekeeper ENG and MTH courses seeking our tutoring?	●
21	What are the common reasons students withdraw from courses before the census date?	●
22	What are characteristics of students who are logging into the LMS the least?	●
23	Is there a correlation between LMS login frequency and course pass rates?	●
24	Is course availability meeting student need? How often are students unable to enroll in courses that they need?	●
25	Are there interventions that reduce pre-census date withdrawals?	●
26	Which courses are under-enrolled, and how long have they trended that direction?	●
27	Which majors are students changing to, and how many credits have they completed prior to the change?	●
28	Which classrooms are used the least?	●
29	What is the course fill rate for the college?	●
30	Is there a correlation between registration date and D/F/W rates?	●
31	Which courses have the highest D/F/W rates?	●
32	In which courses/sections are students most likely to complete their assignments?	●
33	Which majors have the lowest GPAs?	●
34	Which majors have the strongest retention?	●
35	Are LMS utilization and engagement growing over time?	●
36	How do this year's revenue and expenses compare to those of last year?	●
37	What is the breakdown of costs by financial fund, function, cost center, and account?	●
38	Do students who use academic advising the most persist at higher rates?	●
39	How do early alerts impact student persistence?	●
40	Are there differences between online and in-person course pass rates?	●

## STUDENT EXPERIENCE

41	What is the average account balance of students who have stopped out of the college?	●
42	Is there a correlation between students who are late on payments and retention?	●
43	Has the FAFSA completion rate changed over time?	●
44	Has the number of students requesting basic needs and mental health support changed?	●
45	Are more students requesting emergency aid or gap scholarships?	●
46	Is there a specific time of year when requests for mental health, basic needs, or financial support increase?	●
47	Are there any predictors of which students might face barriers to satisfactory academic progress?	●
48	What are the most common holds stopped-out students have on their accounts?	●
49	Do students who attend new student orientation have higher retention rates?	●
50	Do students who opt in to student success courses have higher retention rates?	●
51	On average, how many credits have students earned when they make their first career services appointment?	●
52	Which majors are having the most successful transfer-out rates?	●
53	Does transfer advising correlate with higher transfer-out rates?	●
54	Which majors have the highest stop-out rates?	●
55	How many stop-out students are more than halfway done with their program?	●
56	How many transfer-aspirational students have a GPA of 2.0 or lower?	●
57	Which student populations intend to transfer to a four-year college but do not?	●
58	How many students have financial aid on file but are not registered for the next semester?	●
59	How many students are close to earning a degree or credential but near a maximum credit threshold after which they won't be eligible for financial aid?	●
60	How many students have at least one hold preventing registration?	●
61	Is our honors program attracting and retaining students?	●
62	Which social and cultural events are best attended?	●
63	What is the average wait time to schedule an advising appointment?	●
64	Are students who receive support from supplemental sources, such as TRIO or Veterans Services, having improved outcomes?	●
65	What are the primary reasons why academically stable students are leaving the institution?	●
66	To what degree are students using virtual services, such as online advising or online career services?	●

## ADVANCEMENT AND EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

67	Are we hitting our fundraising targets?	●
68	When we apply for grants, how often are we successful?	●
69	Which alumni engagement strategies are effective?	●
70	Which business and industries are growing in our area?	●
71	What types of jobs are projected to grow in our region?	●
72	What are our job placement rates?	●
73	Have our major gifts contributions changed over time?	●
74	Which employer partners are most frequently hiring our graduates?	●
75	Which programs result in students earning the highest wages?	●

### Achieve Insight at the Speed of Conversation

Edify is EAB's education data platform, a solution designed specifically for higher education.

<b>Data Warehousing and Integration</b> <i>Bring your data together</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cloud-native data lake and data warehouse</li> <li>Integration hub</li> <li>Snapshooting</li> <li>Data transformation</li> </ul>	<b>Data Governance</b> <i>Build a culture of data confidence</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data dictionary creation</li> <li>Data lineage</li> <li>Permissions management</li> <li>Data processing logs and monitoring</li> </ul>	<b>Reporting and Analytics</b> <i>Empower your team with insight</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Custom or pre-built analytics</li> <li>Simplified operational reporting</li> <li>No- or low-code data exploration</li> <li>Data visualization through your preferred BI tools</li> </ul>
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**Professional Services Hours**  
Extend your team's capacity

EAB support to meet you where you are. Your team's use of Edify can be self-service or managed partially or fully by EAB.

Strategy and Culture Support    Integration Services    Process Consulting    Data Science and Analysis