

## TIP SHEET

# Addressing "Summer Melt" and Declining Enrollment

According to the [National Student Clearing House Research Center](#), undergraduate enrollment fell by 9.4%—nearly 1.4 million students—between spring 2020 and spring 2022. Many of these students are returning to school in the fall, but they are often struggling to stay motivated and engaged. This is often due to a lack of communication from the institution, a lack of support services, or a lack of resources. To address this issue, institutions should focus on developing a comprehensive communication strategy to keep applicants and enrollees engaged, informed, and excited about attending your school.

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## Leverage your data and personalize communications.

- Analyze your enrollment data to identify at-risk students. Pull reports to see which have incomplete forms, have not selected courses or housing, or are otherwise unresponsive
- Use data trends and patterns to drive communication strategies
- Personalize your communications based on enrollee activity and characteristics

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## Embrace Technology.

- Today's college students grew up with cell phones and texting. It's critical to ensure that SMS is a key communication channel across offices and that those tools are TCPA compliant
- Provide a single, mobile-friendly online portal where new and returning students can access information, complete course and housing requests, pay for tuition, and apply for financial aid

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### Provide one-on-one support.

- 39% of Gen Z say one-on-one communication is the most effective form. Assign all enrollees a dedicated advisor and encourage constant communication
- Make advisor updates and information tracking available to other offices for increased personalization opportunities

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### Differentiate Your Institution and Communicate the Value of a Degree.

Tap into your alumni community. Incorporate their success stories in your communication plan

- Develop a program for existing students to connect with and mentor enrollees
- Find the “influencers” on your campus and encourage them to promote your institution in their content
- Tell your story and share the impact your institution is having on its community

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### Build Excitement and Create a Sense of Belonging

- Create an identity for your incoming freshman class and use it to brand swag, marketing materials, direct mail pieces, and social media groups
- Build a digital hub for the incoming class to connect with other enrollees, existing students, faculty, and staff



### Signs of at-risk enrollees:

- Failure to complete forms
- Unresponsiveness
- Avoiding class enrollment
- Reluctance to make housing decisions

It is also crucial to convey your school's unique culture by offering ongoing communication with peers, coaches, and teachers. Today's students have grown up with technology and want to engage via text, video chat, social media, and more.

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